









# COBBETT'S Parliamentary Debates

DURING THE  
FOURTH SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT  
OF THE  
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,  
AND OF THE  
KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN THE TWENTY-FIRST,  
Appointed to meet at Westminster, the Twenty-third Day of  
January, in the Fiftieth Year of the Reign of His Majesty  
King GEORGE the Third, Annoque Domini One Thousand  
Eight Hundred and Ten.

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VOL. XV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD  
BETWEEN THE 23RD OF JANUARY AND THE 1ST OF MARCH, 1810.

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1810.



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# LIST OF HIS MAJESTY'S MINISTERS,

FROM

JANUARY TO JUNE, 1810.

## CABINET MINISTERS.

Earl Camden	- - - - -	President of the Council.
Lord Eldon	- - - - -	Lord High Chancellor.
Earl of Westmorland	- - - - -	Lord Privy Seal.
Earl Bathurst	- - - - -	President of the Board of Trade.
Right Hon. Spencer Perceval	- - - - -	{ First Lord of the Treasury (Prime Minister) Chancellor and Under-Treasurer of the Exchequer, also Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
Right Hon. Charles Philip Yorke	- - - - -	
Lord Mulgrave	- - - - -	First Lord of the Admiralty.
Right Hon. Richard Ryder	- - - - -	Master-general of the Ordnance.
Marquis Wellesley	- - - - -	Secretary of State for the Home Department.
Earl of Liverpool	- - - - -	Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
		Secretary of State for the Department of War and the Colonies.

## NOT OF THE CABINET.

Right Hon. Robert Saunders Dundas	- - - - -	President of the Board of Control for the Affairs of India.
Right Hon. George Rose	- - - - -	Vice President of the Board of Trade and Treasurer of the Navy.
Viscount Palmerston	- - - - -	Secretary at War.
Lord Charles Somerset	- - - - -	} Joint Paymaster-general of the Forces.
Right Hon. Charles Long	- - - - -	
Earl of Chichester	- - - - -	} Joint Postmaster-general.
Earl of Sandwich	- - - - -	
Richard Wharton, esq.	- - - - -	} Secretaries of the Treasury.
Charles Arbuthnot, esq.	- - - - -	
Sir William Grant	- - - - -	Master of the Rolls.
Sir Vicary Gibbs	- - - - -	Attorney-General.
Sir Thomas Plumer	- - - - -	Solicitor-General.

## PERSONS IN THE MINISTRY OF IRELAND.

Duke of Richmond	- - - - -	Lord Lieutenant.
Lord Manners	- - - - -	Lord High Chancellor.
W. Wellesley Pole	- - - - -	Chief Secretary.
Right Hon. John Foster	- - - - -	Chancellor of the Exchequer.

# Parliamentary Debates

During the Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Kingdom of Great Britain the Twenty-first, appointed to meet at Westminster, the Twenty-third Day of January, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ten, in the Fiftieth Year of the Reign of His Majesty King GEORGE the Third.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Tuesday, January 23, 1810.*

### [THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS' SPEECH.]

The Fourth Session of the Fourth Parliament of the United Kingdom was this day opened by Commission: the Commissioners were the archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, earl Camden, the earl of Aylesford, and the earl of Dartmouth. At three o'clock the Lords Commissioners took their seats upon the woolsack; and the Commons pursuant to message, having attended, with their Speaker, at the bar, the Lord Chancellor informed them, that his Majesty had been pleased to direct his Commission to certain lords, therein named, to open the session; which Commission they should hear read, and afterwards his Majesty's most gracious Speech. The Commission was then read by the clerk at the table, after which the Lord Chancellor read the Speech as it here follows:

"My Lords and Gentlemen; His Majesty commands us to express to you his deep regret that the exertions of the emperor of Austria against the ambition and violence of France have proved unavailing, and that his imperial majesty has been compelled to abandon the contest, and to conclude a disadvantageous peace. Although the war was undertaken by that monarch without encouragement on the part of his Majesty, every effort was made for the assistance of Austria which his majesty deemed consistent with the due

support of his allies, and with the welfare and interest of his own dominions.—An attack upon the naval armaments and establishments in the Scheldt afforded at once the prospect of destroying a growing force, which was daily becoming more formidable to the security of this country, and of diverting the exertions of France from the important objects of reinforcing her armies on the Danube, and of controlling the spirit of resistance in the north of Germany. These considerations determined his majesty to employ his forces in an expedition to the Scheldt.—Although the principal ends of this expedition have not been attained, his Majesty confidently hopes that advantages, materially affecting the security of his Majesty's dominions in the further prosecution of the war, will be found to result from the demolition of the docks and arsenals at Flushing.—This important object his Majesty was enabled to accomplish, in consequence of the reduction of the island of Walcheren by the valour of his fleets and armies.—His Majesty has given directions that such documents and papers should be laid before you as he trusts will afford satisfactory information upon the subject of this expedition.—We have it in command to state to you that his Majesty had uniformly notified to Sweden his Majesty's decided wish, that in determining upon the question of peace or war with France, and other continental powers, she should be guided by considerations resulting from her own situation and interests, while his

Majesty therefore laments that Sweden should have found it necessary to purchase peace by considerable sacrifices, his Majesty cannot complain that she has concluded it without his Majesty's participation. It is his Majesty's earnest wish that no event may occur to occasion the interruption of those relations of amity which it is the desire of his Majesty and the interests of both countries to preserve.—We have it further in command to communicate to you, that the efforts of his Majesty for the protection of Portugal have been powerfully aided by the confidence which the prince regent has reposed in his Majesty, and by the co-operation of the local government, and of the people of that country. The expulsion of the French from Portugal, by his Majesty's forces under lieutenant-general lord viscount Wellington, and the glorious victory obtained by him at Talavera, contributed to check the progress of the French arms in the Peninsula during the late campaign.—His Majesty directs us to state that the Spanish government, in the name, and by the authority of king Ferdinand the seventh, has determined to assemble the general and extraordinary Cortes of the nation. His Majesty trusts that this measure will give fresh animation and vigour to the councils and the arms of Spain, and successfully direct the energies and spirit of the Spanish people to the maintenance of the legitimate monarchy, and to the ultimate deliverance of their country.—The most important considerations of policy and of good faith require, that as long as this great cause can be maintained with a prospect of success, it should be supported, according to the nature and circumstances of the contest, by the strenuous and continued assistance of the power and resources of his Majesty's dominions; and his Majesty relies on the aid of his Parliament in his anxious endeavours to frustrate the attempts of France against the independence of Spain and Portugal, and against the happiness and freedom of those loyal and resolute nations.—His Majesty commands us to acquaint you, that the intercourse between his Majesty's minister in America and the government of the United States, has been suddenly and unexpectedly interrupted. His Majesty sincerely regrets this event; he has, however, received the strongest assurances from the American minister resident at this court, that the United States are desirous of maintaining friendly

relations between the two countries. This desire will be met by a corresponding disposition on the part of his Majesty.

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons; His Majesty has directed us to inform you, that he has ordered the Estimates for the current year to be laid before you: his Majesty has directed them to be formed with all the attention to economy which the support of his allies and the security of his dominions will permit. And his Majesty relies upon your zeal and loyalty to afford him such supplies as may be necessary for those essential objects.—He commands us to express how deeply he regrets the pressure upon his subjects, which the protracted continuance of the war renders inevitable.

"My Lords and Gentlemen; We are commanded by his Majesty to express his hope that you will resume the consideration of the state of the inferior clergy, and adopt such further measures upon this interesting subject as may appear to you to be proper.—We have it further in command to state to you that the accounts which will be laid before you, of the trade and revenue of the country, will be found highly satisfactory.—Whatever temporary and partial inconvenience may have resulted from the measures which were directed by France against those great sources of our prosperity and strength, those measures have wholly failed of producing any permanent or general effect.—The inveterate hostility of our enemy continues to be directed against this country with unabated animosity and violence. To guard the security of his Majesty's dominions, and to defeat the designs which are meditated against us and our Allies, will require the utmost efforts of vigilance, fortitude, and perseverance.—In every difficulty and danger his Majesty confidently trusts that he shall derive the most effectual support, under the continued blessing of Divine Providence, from the wisdom of his Parliament, the valour of his forces, and the spirit and determination of his people."

After the Commons had withdrawn, the earl of Harrowby was introduced by the earls of Dartmouth and Liverpool. His patent of creation having been read at the table, his lordship took the oaths and his seat; as did also the marquis of Lansdowne, and several other lords. The House adjourned during pleasure, and assembled again for business soon after five. The Speech was then again read to their

lordships by the Lord Chancellor, and afterwards by the clerk; upon which,

The Earl of *Glasgow* rose to move an Address to his Majesty; but spoke in so low a tone as not to be clearly audible below the bar. After briefly touching upon the leading topics in his Majesty's most-gracious Speech, his lordship observed, that eventful as the present crisis was, and gloomy as the picture presented by the existing situation of Europe must be allowed to be, yet the means and resources of this empire were equal to the successful prosecution of the arduous contest we had to sustain, unless marred by internal divisions, paralysed by the want of that unanimity, at all times so desirable, but in the present perilous times so indispensably necessary. His lordship extolled the magnanimity of the emperor of Austria, and lamented the adverse fortune of the war, during which so much valuable blood and treasure had been sacrificed on the continent. The noble earl then took a brief review of the measures of his Majesty's ministers with regard to their foreign policy and various expeditions, and contended, that, whatever might have been the result, they were not only undeserving of censure, but entitled to the thanks of their country. His lordship concluded, by moving an Address to his Majesty, which he read, and which was, as usual, an echo of the Speech.

The Lord Chancellor, under the influence of indisposition, now withdrew from the House, and his seat on the woolsack was taken, *pro tempore*, by the Chief Justice, lord Ellenborough.

Viscount *Grimston*, in seconding the address, solicited their Lordships attention to the few observations which presented themselves to his mind, when he contemplated the state of this country and of Europe in general. Whatever difference of opinion might exist in regard to the different measures of government, their lordships would generally concur in the propriety of making every exertion to divert the attention of the enemy, while he was endeavouring to crush the power of Austria. That Austria had been compelled to make a disadvantageous peace, was one of those disasters which we ought to lament in common with the other calamities of Europe. The expedition to Walcheren had been projected to assist our allies. His Majesty had graciously been pleased to say, he would cause satisfactory documents to be laid before the House re-

lating to that expedition; therefore the noble lord thought it was unnecessary to discuss the question until the documents appeared. Although the expedition to the Scheldt had not succeeded in its main object, considerable advantages were derived, and our own security was strengthened, by the demolition of the arsenal and docks of Flushing. Amidst all the evils with which the hand of Providence had surrounded this country, it was satisfactory to find, that, after the enemy had exerted to the utmost his hatred and his malice against the commerce of England, and had shut the ports under his control against our trade, still he was unable to make any serious impression upon our commercial prosperity and resources. His lordship observed, with pleasure, that Spain and Portugal were yet able to hold out against the common enemy. Notwithstanding the calamities which those countries had laboured under, the spirit which had so gloriously animated them remained unbroken. France might gain battles, but the force of the conqueror could never subjugate them, while their sole occupation was arms, and their principles attachment to a legitimate sovereign.—On the subject of America, it was his lordship's wish that the government of that country might prove as amicable in its disposition, as the British government. With respect to our trade, every effort had been made by the enemy to effect its destruction. Buonaparté had done all that his power could contrive, but he had found that British commerce, like British valour, would make a firm stand. We had lately witnessed a scene of joy and exultation which could not be equalled in the annals of the world. Could the Ruler of the French nation have received such gratification as the Jubilee afforded our venerable sovereign and his subjects? Providence had placed us above the malice of our enemies, and he hoped no man in the country would be so mad as to neglect the means with which we had been blessed for our defence. His lordship concluded by repeating, that if we were true to ourselves, we might defy the world.

The Earl of *St. Vincent* then rose and said: My lords, when I addressed a few observations at the commencement of the last session of parliament to your lordships, I thought my age and infirmities would preclude me from ever again presenting myself to your consideration. But, my lords, such have been the untoward and

calamitous events which have occurred since that period, that I am once more induced, by my strength will admit, to trouble your lordships with a few of my sentiments on the present occasion. Indeed, we have wonderful-extraordinary men in these days, who have ingenuity enough to blazon, with the finest colours, to sound with the trumpet and the drum; in fact, to varnish over the greatest calamities of the country, and endeavour to prove that our greatest misfortunes ought to be considered as our greatest blessings. Such was their course of proceeding after the disastrous convention of Cintra. And now in his Majesty's Speech they have converted another disaster into a new triumph. They talk of the glorious victory of Talavera, a victory which led to no advantage, and had all the consequences of defeat. The enemy took prisoners, the sick and the wounded, and our own troops were finally obliged precipitately to retreat. I do not mean to condemn the conduct of the officers employed either in Spain or Walcheren; I believe they did their duty. There is no occasion to wonder at the awful events which have occurred;—they are caused by the weakness, infatuation and stupidity of ministers. I will maintain, my lords, that we owe all our disasters and disgrace to the ignorance and incapacity of his Majesty's present administration. But what could the nation expect from men who came into office under the mask of vile hypocrisy, and have maintained their places by imposture and delusion? Look at the whole of their conduct. The first instance of the pernicious influence of their principles was their treatment of a country at peace with us; in a state of profound peace they attacked her unprepared and brought her into a state of inveterate and open hostility. This was a foul act; and the day may come when repentance will be too late. Their next achievement was to send one of the ablest men who ever commanded an army into the centre of Spain, unprovided with every requisite for such a dangerous march. If sir John Moore had not acted according to his own judgment in the perilous situation in which he had been wantonly exposed, every man of that army had been lost to the country. By his transcendent judgment, however, that army made one of the ablest retreats recorded in the page of history; and, while he saved the remnant of his valiant troops, his own life was sacrificed

in the cause of his country. And what tribute had his Majesty's ministers paid to his valued memory, what reward conferred for such eminent services? Why my lords, even in this place, insidious aspersions were cast upon his character. People were employed in all parts of the town to calumniate his conduct. But, in spite of all the runners and dependents of administration, the character of that general will always be revered as one of the ablest men this country ever saw. After this abortive enterprise, another, equally foolish, equally unsuccessful, and no less ruinous, was carried into execution; another general was sent with troops into the heart of the peninsula, under similar circumstances; and the glorious victory alluded to was purchased with the useless expenditure of our best blood and treasure. But what shall I say, my lords, when I come to mention the expedition to Walcheren. Why, I think it almost useless to say one word on the subject. It was ill advised; ill planned; even partial success in it was doubtful; and the ultimate object of it impracticable. It is high time that parliament should adopt strong measures, or else the voice of the country will resound like thunder in their ears. Any body may be a minister in these days. Ministers may flow from any corrupted source; they pop in, and they pop out like the man and woman in a peasant's barometer; they rise up like tadpoles; they may be compared to wasps, to hornets, to locusts; they send forth their pestilential breath over the whole country, and nip and destroy every fair flower in the land. The conduct of his majesty's government has led to the most frightful disasters, which are no were exceeded in the annals of history. The country is in that state which makes peace inevitable; it will be compelled to make peace, however disadvantageous, because it will be unable to maintain a war, so shamefully misconducted and so disastrous in its consequences.—The noble earl, after shewing the injuries which must eventually befall the shipping interest, in case of a peace, when almost every ship in the river would have a broom fixed on the top of the mast, concluded by submitting a question to the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether it was in contemplation to make a dock for the future reception of our ships at Northfleet, which he recommended as a judicious measure?

Lord Mulgrave doubted how far it was re-

gular to answer a question asked under the circumstances of a pending discussion upon another subject, but had no objection to state that the object alluded to had not escaped the attention of the board of Admiralty; whether the plan would be carried into execution he could not at present with any certainty say, as a variety of considerations appertaining to the subject must necessarily come under previous consideration and discussion.

The Earl of *Aberdeen* said a few words expressive of his intention to call the attention of the House at some future period to certain parts of the Reports of the Board of Naval Revision.

Lord *Greyville* rose and said: My lords, I readily gave way to the noble earl (*St. Vincent*); for who could be better entitled to the attention of your lordships than one who has so largely contributed to the glory, and participated in the splendid triumphs of the country. My lords, I would readily also have given way to any noble lord younger and more active than myself, who would have taken upon him the task of pointing out the distressing and perilous state of the country, the errors of those, to whom the lamentable situation of our affairs is to be attributed, and those remedies which can alone be effectual for the evils by which we are now so sorely oppressed. I am, however, anxious to address your lordships thus early, for the purpose of moving such an amendment as I conceive necessary at the present crisis, that I may anticipate any casual and irrelevant observation, by which the discussion of this night might have been drawn out of that course which I think ought to be adhered to, upon the present occasion. We are now imperiously called upon to do our duty, and to institute those inquiries which the misconduct of ministers have rendered absolutely necessary—a misconduct, from which a series of unexampled disasters and calamities have resulted to the country. My lords, my heart is full, and I must give vent to my feelings. The day must come when ministers will have to render an account to parliament of the treasure which they have wasted, and the lives which they have sacrificed in useless and unprofitable expeditions. We owe it to the country, that the king's ministers should be called upon to render that account, and we shall fail in the discharge of our duty to the country, if we do not insist upon it. The day will come, when the mere fact of an

overflowing treasury, alluded to in the speech of the king's commissioners, will be utterly insufficient to satisfy this House, or the people of these realms; when we must inquire, not merely as to the fact, but as to the foundation of it, and the consequences which result from it. The day will come when the conduct of ministers, respecting America, must come under discussion, and be brought to the test of inquiry; when it must become a subject for deep and serious investigation, whether in a country that yet boasts of freedom; whether in a house of parliament that yet keeps up the forms of discussion; whether it is to be endured that garbled, mutilated, and misrepresented documents are to be laid before parliament, not merely concealing what it was not thought fit to communicate, but actually, upon the face of those garbled and mutilated documents, giving an interpretation directly opposite to the sense of them in their entire and original state. In the same manner, with respect to our expeditions, it is due to the memory of those who have fallen in the service of their country; it is due to the memory of those who have bravely but ingloriously fallen a sacrifice to the ignorance, the incapacity, and the misconduct of ministers; it is due to a deluded and a suffering people, who demand it at our hands, that we should institute a rigorous and an effectual inquiry into the conduct of those ministers to whom these disasters are to be attributed. Yet in spite of the disgraceful and calamitous expedition to *Walcheren*, where the treasure of the country was so lavishly wasted, and the lives of its gallant defenders so uselessly sacrificed, did his Majesty's ministers advise his Majesty to tell the city of London that he did not think it necessary to institute an inquiry; however, we find in the Speech of the king's commissioners, that ministers, from a sense of their guilty situation, from a consciousness of their own glaring misconduct, and from a fear of the consequences of that misconduct, have condescended to tell us, that they will lay before parliament, certain documents and papers relative to this subject. But let us not be deluded by this shew of a readiness for inquiry; the Speech merely says, such papers and documents as shall be deemed satisfactory by ministers themselves. It becomes us, my lords, to adopt a course of proceeding adequate to the exigency of the case and the difficulty of the times. The Address

moved by the noble earl does not contain any pledge to the country of an intention on the part of your lordships, to institute inquiry; it does not even declare the necessity of having all the papers and documents laid before us, relative to this disastrous expedition; but merely consists of a complimentary expression of thanks, that certain papers are intended to be produced. My lords, we shall not this night do our duty, if we do not give a decided pledge to the country, that a rigorous and effectual inquiry shall be instituted, and the explicit declaration of this pledge is the object of the Amendment which it is my intention to move. I do not mean to condemn the conduct of the officers employed by ministers in their ill-planned expeditions; I am disposed to believe that the officers have done their duty, and that all the disastrous results are to be attributed to the want of information, the criminal improvidence, and the ill-digested plans of his Majesty's ministers. Let not our attention be drawn off from the misconduct of ministers by any unwarrantable attempt of theirs to throw blame from themselves upon the officers employed. Your lordships must all remember the manner in which the blame of our former failure in Spain was attempted to be thrown upon that gallant officer, sir John Moore. It was insinuated on that occasion, that he had an unlimited discretion, and therefore that whatever occurred must be attributed to the measures which he chose to adopt. But, my lords, how did the real state of the case turn out? It was discovered in the sequel that, so far from having an unlimited discretion, sir John Moore was fettered in the first instance by the plan of the Secretary of State; that that plan was essentially contrary to the dictates of his own better judgment; that he was sent to the north of Spain when in his own judgment he ought to have been sent to the south; and that when there he was to receive directions from a diplomatic character of whom I wish to say nothing now; but by these directions and instructions sir John Moore was completely fettered, and so far from having an unlimited discretion, he was prevented from exercising his discretion or his judgment under those very difficult circumstances where they might have been eminently useful. The work published by a near relation of that excellent officer, proves clearly and demonstrably the manner in which he was treated by ministers. Yet these very ministers are they, who

attempted to throw all that blame upon sir John Moore, which, upon the fullest investigation, was found entirely to rest with themselves. Your lordships ought not, therefore, to countenance any public outcry against the officers employed in those expeditions, of the disastrous results of which, loud and general complaints are so justly made; but to point public indignation where alone it ought to rest, upon the heads of those ministers who sent out expeditions, either to achieve objects impracticable in themselves, or without the means of achieving any object useful or honourable to the country. If any circumstance should arise out of the inquiry during its progress tending to impeach the conduct of any officer employed, that will be a subject for future investigation; but there are circumstances affecting the conduct of ministers, which are matters of publicity and notoriety, and which no inquiry can render plainer or clearer than they are at present. It is a notorious fact, a fact known to every one, to the whole country, and to all Europe, not that our expeditions have partially succeeded; but, that the expeditions in the prosecution of which so much of the treasure of the country and so many valuable lives have been sacrificed, have uniformly failed, that they present nothing but an unbroken series of disgraceful, irremediable, and irretrievable failures. Who, then, can doubt the necessity, the absolute, the imperious, the indispensable necessity of inquiry, when nothing but disgraceful and irretrievable failures have marked the conduct of ministers, and resulted from their ill advised and ill-digested plans; when nothing in the melancholy retrospect presents itself to our view, but national disgrace arising from their misconduct; an absurd and lamentable waste of the public treasure entrusted to them; and an useless and most melancholy sacrifice of the lives of our gallant countrymen?—Even admitting to them, contrary to all experience, and in defiance of all the presages for the future, which could be drawn from the experience of the past, that the system of sending out expeditions under the present circumstances of the country and in the actual state of the war, was right, still will their misconduct only appear the more glaring, in so grossly misapplying the resources of the country, and wasting its efforts in fruitless attempts, where success was either impossible, or if attained could not have altered the fate of

the campaign. We were told, my lords, last session, of the vast successes which were to flow from our efforts ; of the impression we were to make upon the continent ; nay, my lords, one noble lord went so far as to talk with an air of confidence of the deliverance of Europe. And how has Europe been delivered ? By a series of unparalleled disasters, by expeditions which, in their conduct and results have exhausted our means without making any impression upon the enemy, and which have rendered us the derision of the whole continent. And yet, my lords, in the speech of the king's commissioners, ministers have the confidence, the unblushing confidence, to tell us of a victory gained to the country. Are we then arrived at that melancholy situation of our affairs, in which gilded disasters are to be called splendid victories, and the cypress that droops over the tombs of our gallant defenders, whose lives have been uselessly sacrificed, to be denominated blooming laurels ? The noble lord who seconded the Address spoke of a system of policy, in opposition to which the Address gives a pledge of the continuance of the war, upon the system of continental assistance adopted by the present ministers. My Lords, I have often repeated, and must now repeat again, that the true policy of this country, under its present circumstances, is the principle of husbanding our resources, and acting upon a system of home defence. In the early period of the last war, the system of policy which then appeared to be the best, was essentially different. It was undoubtedly then of importance, to endeavour to raise up a determined spirit in Europe capable of meeting and counteracting the power of France. After, however, France had defeated and broken the confederacy against her, the scene of continental co-operation closed, and our force became no longer available to any useful purpose upon the continent. The same causes operated in the present war ; and the late ministers, acting upon the system of policy which they thought the most advisable, determined to concentrate all the means and resources of the country for the purpose of placing her in a position, in which we might say to France, "our situation is such, that we are completely defended against any domestic insult, whilst our naval superiority will effectually defeat the execution of your designs against our external interests." For this purpose a plan was devised, adapted to our

financial system, under the operation of which we might have gone on to the end of time, still preserving our commanding attitude, and ever and invariably maintaining our ample means of defence. His Majesty's present ministers came into office, and then, my Lords, the system was immediately changed. We were then told, in high sounding periods, in the true spirit of an imbecile confidence, of the disgrace sustained in the character of the country by not assisting our allies, and that the conduct of the preceding administration should only be looked to as a beacon and a land-mark to avoid the same course. Magnificent preparations were immediately made for expeditions upon a great scale. Ministers had the unlimited disposal of the treasure of the country, and, I lament to say, the unlimited disposal of the lives of its brave defenders. How they have wasted the one, and sacrificed the other, is too painfully apparent. They had, at the time of the commencement of the last campaign between France and Austria, a disposable force of 100,000 men ; but, great as this force was, it was impossible they could, by its employment upon the continent, have altered the fate of the war, although I do not mean to dispute that they might have altered the fate of the campaign.—But I will concede to them for the moment, for the sake of argument, what I absolutely deny upon principle, and in point of fact, namely, that it was desirable to adopt a system of continental co-operation, and endeavour to make a powerful diversion in favour of Austria. It surely, my Lords, is apparent, that if a diversion is to be made at all, it ought to be made early, with a sufficient force ; and, lastly, it ought to bear upon the scene and pressure of the war. Now, my lords, in the late campaign with Austria, there was one, if not two opportunities of making a diversion of this nature. With our maritime superiority, and the means which were at that time open to us, we might have landed a large force at Trieste, or in its neighbourhood, which would have borne upon the great pressure of the war, and proved a powerful diversion. Austria was making a gallant struggle, and the army, by which she was finally overwhelmed, owed its success, in a great measure, to the reinforcements it derived from the French troops in the very neighbourhood of Trieste. How, then, would a diversion directed to that quarter have operated ?



Our army would have kept in check the troops under Marmont and Macdonald, and would have effectually prevented them from marching to join the main French army on the Danube. I do not believe that this would ultimately have changed the fate of the war, but it would, very probably, have altered the fate of the campaign. I am aware, that it may be objected that an enormous expence would have been incurred; that a large number of transports must have been employed; and that there would have been a great difficulty in transporting a large army to that distance. There was, however, my lords, another mode of making a powerful diversion; the North of Germany was open to us: how did his Majesty's ministers encourage the risings in the North of Germany? What hopes did they not hold out to the brave inhabitants of those provinces, and how cruelly did they disappoint those hopes, abandoning to destruction those brave men, even in the territories of our own sovereign, whom they had deluded with false hopes and delusive promises. A force landed in the North of Germany would have found ready to co-operate with them, not an armed peasantry, not an undisciplined rabble, but disciplined troops, disbanded soldiers; men who had been trained to the use of arms, and in habits of discipline and subordination. To meet such a force the National Guards of Paris could not have been sent, nor the armed *Maréchaussée* of the Frontiers, but regular troops must have been detached from Saxony and Bavaria, and a powerful diversion would thus have been made; not that I believe, my lords, that the fate of the war would even thus ultimately have been changed, although the event of the campaign very probably might. This, my lords, is what they might have done, and now comes "like a lean and blasted ear" what they have done.—Of the disposable force which they had of 100,000 men, about 15 or 16,000 were stationed in Sicily; for what purpose they were kept there may be the subject of a future enquiry, but is foreign to the present discussion. The remainder were divided into two armies, I will say for the sake of round numbers of 40,000 each, though I believe neither the troops sent to Portugal, nor those sent to Walcheren amounted to that number, yet they did not fall far short of it. With respect to the force sent to Spain, ministers seemed resolutely determined not to profit by expe-

rience; precisely the same errors and the same faults were committed as in the expedition sent there under sir John Moore. The want of concert with the Spanish government, which was so decidedly proved in the expedition under sir John Moore, was equally apparent in that under lord Wellington. We find in the latter precisely the same want of co-operation and concert which so decidedly marked every stage of the former. Another instance of similitude of error is still more glaring. One would scarcely believe it possible, that any set of men would send out an expedition without money to pay the troops, and yet we find by the public dispatches of sir David Baird, that this was the case with respect to the expedition under sir John Moore. So great and manifest an inconvenience would not, one would suppose, have been repeated, but, as if determined to persevere in every species of error, both the expedition to the Peninsula under lord Wellington, and the expedition to Walcheren under lord Chatham, were deficient in this most essential article of military supply. We find, my lords, precisely the same errors with respect to the expectation of an effectual co-operation from the armed peasantry of Spain. The dispatches of sir John Moore point out how cruelly he was disappointed in the expectation held out to him, of receiving an active and efficient assistance from the Spanish forces. Precisely the same errors formed a part of the plan of the expedition under lord Wellington, whose dispatches inform us that this Spanish officer had abandoned a post which he was expected to defend, and that another Spanish officer, instead of remaining in a position where he was expected to make an effectual stand, had suddenly abandoned it, and was precipitately following our army. Nothing can more clearly shew the perseverance in error of his Majesty's ministers, expecting in the first instance a co-operation from an armed peasantry, which it was idle and absurd to expect from men who had not yet learnt the necessary habits of discipline and subordination, and after the fallacy of this expectation had been proved, persevering in the same error, and persisting in expecting an effective assistance, and making that a part of the plan of a second expedition to the Peninsula although the absurdity of it was manifest even before its fallacy was proved, and although all idea of that species of co-operation had been dis-

tinently shewn by experience to be nugatory and absurd. This was the miserable delusion to which sir John Moore was sacrificed. These were the hopes which were held out to him ; but which, to the moment of his expiring in the arms of victory, never were realised. Yet the lesson taught, by that fatal catastrophe was lost upon ministers. Ministers ought to have known that history is pregnant with proof, that an armed population cannot be considered as a disciplined army : that it is not enough that men should be attached to the cause they are to defend, but disciplined, steady, and obedient to command, having skilful officers ; able to execute the commands they receive, and capable of judging what commands to give, and at the same time fit to be trusted. Why send out expeditions to meet the same failures and suffer the same losses, leaving no monuments to their country but those which are calculated to excite a just indignation ?—a deep and unavailing regret ? We are told, my lords, in the Speech of the King's Commissioners, that the expedition to Walcheren was undertaken with the view of making a diversion in favour of Austria. The absurdity of attempting to make a diversion in Walcheren instead of the North of Germany, where the great pressure of the war existed, is too manifest to admit of a doubt or require an argument. An immense expence was incurred, no less than 38 ships of the line were employed, more than 100 frigates, and an immense number of transports. It was known to ministers, in September 1808, that a war was likely to take place between Austria and France ; yet this immense armament to the Scheldt, which was to operate the so much-boasted diversion in favour of Austria, did not sail till the latter end of July. Before it sailed the Armistice was signed which led to the fatal Treaty that prostrated the Austrian monarchy ; not only this event had taken place, but intelligence of the signature of that Armistice had actually arrived in this country. And thus, when all prospect of operating a diversion in favour of Austria had failed, the Expedition sailed from our shores, and the destruction of a few ships, and the plunder of the docks of the enemy, were to be substituted for the object so much boasted of—that of making a diversion in favour of Austria. Your ally, vanquished and subdued, had accepted the law from the conqueror, and then your tardy army left

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your shores. Can this need a comment ? Is it possible, knowing these facts, to refer to future inquiry the merits of his Majesty's ministers ? Why, it would be a mockery of all justice ; you would insult your country, you would degrade yourselves. Shall I be told that it was a great armament ; that it was delayed by necessity ; that, like every naval force, it depended on the winds, and the transports being in readiness ? Why all this is not new to you. If you want to land 40,000 men in the neighbourhood of the Scheldt, it is necessary to have transports to convey them ; but if, by events which you could not controul, it was impossible to send this armament sooner, why send it at all ? The Expedition sailed for this reason only—because his Majesty's ministers were afraid to avow, that after all the expence which had been incurred, it had not actually sailed till its object was defeated, and success was impossible. It was once said by the Dey of Algiers, when an English fleet threatened to bombard the town, that if they would give him half the cost of the bombs he would burn the town himself ; and Buonaparté might have said, that if we would give him half the sum which our expedition had cost, he would give the ships we wished to destroy. But, my lords, besides incurring an immense expence to achieve an object of comparatively trifling value, a still more serious objection exists to this expedition. We have been charged upon the continent with sacrificing the interests of our allies to expeditions, the only objects of which were to burn a few ships, and destroy docks, with the mere view of some little interest of our own. Till the hour of the Copenhagen expedition, nothing had occurred in our conduct to give currency to this falsehood ; now, however, a still greater and more just currency must be given to it from the nature and achievements of this expedition to Walcheren, which terminated in the mighty exploit of blowing up the basin and the docks of Flushing. The plan of this expedition displayed all those errors, that egregious want of information, and that extreme incapacity which have marked all the expeditions of his Majesty's ministers. At the first point of attack, where, according to the information of ministers, only 2,000 men were stationed, 14,000 were found ; and the second point of attack, which, according to the same information, was stated to be completely open and accessi-

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ble, was found to be strongly fortified, beyond the reach of our attack, secure from hostile approach, and inaccessible to our force. I am disposed to believe that the officers employed in this expedition have fully discharged their duty. The reason for the appointment of the noble lord who commanded that expedition I shall not now inquire. It was undoubtedly most unfortunate for him, the first time he held a command, to be placed at the head of an expedition which was attended by nothing but difficulty and disappointment. I am disposed to believe, however, that in that situation he did all that could be reasonably expected or was possible to accomplish. The error was in the plan, and the want of all foresight or information on the part of his Majesty's ministers. The part the noble lord I have alluded to took in it as a minister is another question, but as a commander I believe he did as much as the difficulties of his situation would allow. The failure of the expedition, therefore, is to be attributed to the ministry, whose ill-judged plan and whose gross want of information form a prominent part of their errors and misconduct.—You have seen, my lords, that these different disastrous expeditions have been attended with a dreadful waste of life; that they were collected and dispatched at an immense expence; that the resources of the country, and the lives of its armies, were squandered upon vain and impracticable objects, under circumstances naturally to be foreseen, and which ought consequently to have been guarded against. I know there may be cases in which it may be necessary to expose your armies not only to the dangers of battle, but also to those of disease. Deeply to be regretted as such cases are undoubtedly; yet they may certainly exist. Why our armies were exposed in unhealthy situations in Spain—whether it was necessary they should be so exposed; will be matter for future inquiry. How has that happened as to Walcheren? the place, the situation, nay, the season of the year were chosen by his majesty's ministers. There is a season of the year when the air of that place is most pestilential and dangerous; yet to that place, and at that time, say his majesty's ministers, "we will send the flower of the British army. We will not send it at a time when its operations may be advantageous, but we will send it when, from

every information, it will be destroyed, more by disease than by the sword." What, my Lords, would Austria have said, for whom this expedition was, it seems, intended as a diversion? What would Austria have said had she been consulted on this subject? She would have said, "If you do send an expedition to that place at all, send them there when France shall be engaged in active war against me, and do not wait till the contest is decided; send them thither, too, at a season when the climate is not so pestilential as it occasionally is. To that pestilential climate if you will send your troops, let it not be when common information tells you they must waste away by sickness, without accomplishing any valuable object." Have ministers then been ignorant, have they not read of the nature of the climate of Walcheren, in that book to which one would think they would naturally resort under their circumstances—I mean sir John Pringle's work upon the Diseases of the Army? Have they not examined that work, where they would find the pestilential effects of the climate of that unhealthy island described, and proved by our own dearly-bought experience? Nay, so notorious have been the effects of that climate, that the Swiss Cantons, when they furnished mercenary troops as auxiliaries to the Dutch, thought it necessary to stipulate expressly that they should not be sent to Walcheren during the noxious season, it being well known that if they were sent there they must inevitably perish. This then, my lords, is not a case of unforeseen calamity. Ministers knew, or ought to have known, all these things before they sent an army into Walcheren; and they are of consequence most deeply responsible for the lives of those brave men, who perished there, without the chance of being able to confer any benefit upon their country, which might afford her some consolation under a loss so afflicting.—Great then, my lords, as were the deficiencies in the formation and execution of the plan of this expedition, it is marked by this further essential defect, that it was directed to an object, in which its exertions could be of no avail. Our armies had hardly been there a month, when the object appeared clearly impracticable to all, but to his Majesty's ministers. And the commander in chief even, thought too late in coming to that resolution, determined to return. On the 27th of August, we were told by him, who had

advised the expedition, and who had been appointed to command it, that the object was not to be accomplished. If the exertions of the troops must have been confined to the blowing up of basins, and the destruction of docks, could not these things be accomplished without detaining the troops in the island? But after it was obvious, that the object of the expedition was not to be accomplished, the troops were suffered to remain in the island, for two or three months, a prey to the diseases of that pestilential climate! To whom then, my lords, are to be imputed the deaths that took place in consequence? To whom is to be imputed this wanton waste of the valuable lives of our brave defenders? What excuse can these ministers offer to the parents, the relations, the friends, of those brave men, who were suffered to perish thus uselessly and thus ingloriously? What excuse, my lords, can they offer to their country, for this most afflicting loss, which they who do not most bitterly lament, must be totally incapable of any generous or patriotic feeling? While letters were passing and repassing on this subject (when the ministers were attending to other things of comparatively trifling importance), hundreds of British soldiers were perishing, for no object whatever. What man is there, who under such circumstances, would not say, "If I have been so unfortunate as to send you to such a place, for a purpose which cannot be accomplished, at least I shall not suffer you to remain there, after it is determined that your remaining there can be of no use; this atonement, at least, I shall make to you and to my country?" Such, my lords, I should have thought, would have been the feelings of ministers. What they actually were I know not.—With such a case then already established, my lords, do you mean to wait for enquiry, before you pronounce upon that which is now evident? Will garbled papers be a compensation for all this mass of calamity and disgrace, to an injured and outraged country? Will they be a compensation to yourselves; or will such conduct be consistent with your own dignity and duty? Separate yourselves, my lords, I beseech you, in this awful and perilous crisis of your fate, from this misconduct of ministers;—declare your severe reprobation of the conduct of ministers on that point, which is already completely before you, and which from its very nature

can admit of no defence. You will find them, my lords, I have no doubt, attempting as they have done on former occasions, to shift the blame from themselves to the officers commanding this expedition. But they will not stop there. As in the case of Sir John Moore's expedition, they will involve your lordships in the same charge. You, who after the experience you had of their mode of proceeding in the expedition under general Moore, encouraged them to go on in the same course. And how can you, my lords, entirely exculpate yourselves? How can you, who saw what had taken place before in Spain and Portugal without expressing your disapprobation, excuse yourselves from a share in the disasters which have since happened in the same countries? In the constitution of this country, obligation does not, in these cases, rest solely with ministers.—You, too, my lords, have a duty to perform, which if you do not perform, you are justly chargeable with your share in the public calamities. In another view it is of the last importance that your lordships should diligently attend to those duties which are incumbent upon the parliament; for, unless you do, how can you possibly blame others for the neglect of theirs? Now, my lords, we must look to the virtues of parliament. These are not times for votes of confidence and implicit reliance upon ministers. Parliament must now exert itself in this most imminent crisis of the fate of our country. You cannot be ignorant, my lords, of the situation, the tremendous situation in which your country is placed. Its dangers are no longer to be enhanced by eloquence or aggravated by description. No description can come up to the feelings of those who are at all capable of judging upon the subject. If you cannot look to parliament for its deliverance, where can you look? Can you look for its deliverance to the government? See it, my lords, broken, distracted, incompetent, incapable of exerting any energy or of inspiring any confidence.—It is not from the government, then, that our deliverance is to be expected. It must, my lords, be found, if it is to be found at all, in your own energy and in your own patriotism. On these grounds I shall move an Amendment to this Address, not, indeed, such as comes up to my own feelings on the subject, but one which I trust will be satisfactory to the public, and afford those who may see reason to think their former confidence ill placed, an

opportunity of evincing their determination to give that confidence no longer. To the first paragraph of the Address, expressive of the regret which is felt at the fate of Austria, I certainly do not mean to object. On that point we must all be unanimous. I therefore move, that after the word "That" in the second paragraph, the following Amendment be introduced, expressing our sentiments to his Majesty in such terms as the nature of the case imperiously demands.—"That we have seen, with the utmost sorrow and indignation, the accumulated failures and disasters of the last campaign, the unavailing waste of our national resources, and the loss of so many thousands of our brave troops, whose distinguished and heroic valour has been unprofitably sacrificed in enterprises productive not of advantage, but of lasting injury to the country. Enterprises marked only by a repetition of former errors; tardy and uncombined; incapable in their success of aiding our ally, in the critical moment of his fate, but exposing in their failure his Majesty's councils to the scorn and derision of the enemy.—That we therefore feel ourselves bound, with a view to the only atonement that can now be made to an injured people, to institute, without delay, such rigorous and effectual inquiries and proceedings, as duty impels us to adopt in a case where our country has been subjected to unexampled calamity and disgrace."

Lord *Harrowby* could not have supposed that his noble friend (lord Grenville) could have moved an Amendment such as that he had just proposed; it went not only to determine, that there should be an inquiry, but to induce their lordships now to come to a vote of indiscriminate censure, of absolute condemnation, previous to any inquiry. Such a mode of proceeding was surely unusual and unprecedented in the practice of parliament. It was unjust not to allow the proper time for producing the grounds and stating the reasons upon which rested the decision and conduct of his majesty's government in adopting the measures which his noble friend had so loudly arraigned and so severely condemned. His noble friend had laid down the line of policy to which he said he would himself have adhered, and by which he thought his majesty's ministers ought to have been directed. That policy rested upon the principle of abstaining from continental expeditions; from making ourselves parties

in a warfare which had long ceased to afford any hope of what was so often emphatically called the Deliverance of Europe. He had not the honour of being any length of time in his majesty's councils since a contrary line of conduct had been pursued; but he believed he might remind his noble friend that such a principle had not been exactly conformable to his sentiments on all occasions. He imagined that not very long since, even in the course of the last session, his noble friend had joined in the general enthusiasm in favour of the Spanish cause, and in the anxiety prompted by that enthusiasm to afford it every possible aid in our power. Government did not stimulate and give birth to these exertions on the part of the Spaniards; but they felt it their duty, and conceived it to be the interest of this country, to encourage and assist them. Neither had they incited other powers upon the continent to embark anew in hostilities with France. Austria was inclined to appeal to the chances of war, to the decision of the sword; but to the adoption of that hazardous step she had not been advised or impelled by the influence of the British government. On the contrary, she was warned by his Majesty's ministers of the perils of the attempt, and of the inability of this country to lend her any effectual support; she could not therefore have entered into a new war, from the hope of any powerful diversion to be effected in her favour by the military operations of a British army. But his noble friend would insist, that such a diversion might have been made in her favour by the force which had subsequently been collected here and employed on foreign service, had it been brought to operate at a proper point.—His noble friend had alluded to certain of these points where he conceived our military force might have operated advantageously in favour of Austria. He had chiefly, however, adverted to some points in the Mediterranean, and more decidedly still to the North of Germany. He had also supposed that this country might have brought 100,000 men into the field: where these 100,000 men were to be found, he could not pretend to say; but were it possible to provide and collect them, what must not have been, he would ask, the expence and difficulty of transporting them to the Mediterranean or Adriatic? The thing was actually impracticable. Not less impracticable and unpromising would have been the plan of sending them to the

North of Germany. It was said, they would there find a numerous band of experienced veterans ready to rise, in vindication of their independence, against the common oppressor of mankind. It was even more than insinuated by his noble friend, that the British government had encouraged them to rise, and promised them assistance, but that the promise had not been performed; that these brave patriotic men had been deserted by us and abandoned to their fate. These allegations, he would venture to say, were wholly unfounded; there might have been numbers of men in different districts of Germany who were anxious to rescue themselves from the oppression and tyranny of the French; but they had neither arms nor uniforms, nor were they instigated or encouraged by this country to take up arms against their oppressors. Even had they given a greater demonstration of their power and determination to resist, it still would have been impossible for the British government to send such a force, as had been mentioned, to their assistance. As he had already observed, where was a force of 100,000 men to be found; and even had they been at the disposal of government, how could government have provided the means of subsisting and paying them in the north of Germany? This would have been a thing altogether impracticable, and therefore it was useless to meditate such an enterprise. It surely was no easy matter to collect such a force as that which had been assembled, with all the means necessary for its equipment, especially when so much time was necessary to prepare so large an armament. After the armament had been prepared, intelligence was received of the armistice entered into between France and Austria: yet it was still uncertain whether that armistice would end in a definitive peace. The contrary, for a time, appeared the more probable. Whenever it should be employed, it might therefore contribute to produce a diversion in favour of Austria, and sustain her firmness in resisting, and restrain the enemy in proposing the terms of an unequal and ignominious peace. Looking at all the points within our reach, and where our means might have been effectually exerted, there was no one which promised so favourable a result as an attack upon Flushing and Antwerp. There the enemy had for years been expending immense labour and money in erecting a naval arsenal and depot, and in

rearing up a navy by which he would be enabled to menace the most vulnerable points of these realms. He boasted of having opened a river which had so long been shut, and of having made it as well the station of a naval power, as the source of commercial wealth. It enabled the ruler of France to cherish the fond hopes of gratifying his animosity against this country, and it was well known with what indefatigable zeal and unceasing activity he followed up every favourite design formed by his revenge, or dictated by his ambition. He had often loudly boasted of having brought his designs and his means at Antwerp to full maturity and perfection; and, indeed, when he had a main object to gain, he left nothing untried, and no practicable effort unexerted to accomplish it. Was not this, therefore, a proper object to engage the attention of a British government, and could any doubt be entertained of the policy, nay of the necessity of frustrating or endeavouring to frustrate so formidable a design. Accordingly, it was resolved to make a well directed effort to destroy the arsenal and navy, and to deprive our bitterest enemy of the mightiest means by which he was enabled to annoy us. The design, through various unexpected and unforeseen, because unascertainable difficulties, had not been wholly accomplished; though so far accomplished as to render abortive his schemes of hostility from that quarter; that end, the complete demolition of the harbour and arsenal of Flushing had secured. Whatever disastrous effects had arisen from the operations necessary to its attainment were indeed to be lamented; but they were not in the first instance to have been apprehended. The design promised to be executed in a short time, and before the season set in, whose pestilential influence was particularly to be dreaded and most essential to be guarded against. The Expedition was ready to sail about the middle of July; but was detained nine or ten days by contrary winds, and the other unforeseen and uncontrollable obstacles occurred afterwards to protract the operations till the unhealthy period of the year; but all these obstructions could not possibly have been foreseen or guarded against. This the information would shew which his Majesty had ordered to be laid before their lordships, and until that information was in the possession of their lordships, it would be impossible for them to decide upon the subject, or to institute a fair inquiry. These

reasons, he conceived, would be of themselves sufficient to induce the justice of the House not to accede to the Amendment proposed by his noble friend.—The other point so much insisted upon and reprobated by his noble friend, was the Expedition to Spain and Portugal. Here again his noble friend's strictures and censures were almost in every respect without foundation; great and important objects had been achieved by that Expedition; it had rescued Portugal from the French; it had covered the British arms and the character of the British army with glory, and by the position that army afterwards occupied and maintained, it rendered infinite service to the Spanish armies. It covered them in several points; it secured the defence of Estremadura, and in a great measure that of La Mancha. To this Expedition was also owing the deliverance of Galicia, and the securing of the ships at Ferrol. Were not these important objects, and did not the attainment of them afford very just grounds of triumph and congratulation? Would it, therefore, be fair to condemn in the gross the conduct of his Majesty's ministers; to precipitate an inquiry into the measures they had pursued, or rather, to pronounce judgment and condemnation on them without instituting any inquiry at all? Such, he thought, would be the effect of adopting the Amendment moved by his noble friend, and he therefore felt himself imperiously called upon to resist it as a proceeding unprecedented and unjust.

The Earl of *Muir* said, if he thought any power of speech or language necessary to excite the indignation of their lordships or of the country, at the scenes which the government had lately exhibited to the world, he would not have addressed the house. The noble earl who had just spoken had asked, whether without proofs they should go into inquiry, nay more pronounce judgment? But would he therefore contend, that without proofs the house should go into an expression of approval? For his part, he wanted no proofs, but those already before the House. The proofs demanding not only inquiry but condemnation stood confessed before them. They were plain and manifest. The whole conviction of his mind, and the conviction of every one who considered the subject, called for judgment. It was impossible to argue against the direful effects already experienced, and those still more terrible calamities which threatened us. Upon the

face of the case he would therefore go the full length of the Amendment, although it only pledged their lordships to inquiry at present. The noble earl had not fairly stated the case of Austria, as put by his noble friend. He would admit, as stated in the speech, that we had not encouraged Austria to go to war, but what was the real fact? Austria, having once of her own accord, by her own voluntary determination, drawn the sword against France, ministers would have neglected their duty if they did not immediately employ every means to assist her exertions. We were interested in her success, and it was their duty to encourage not only her, but every other power that was disposed to fight her battles. As no specific promise of aid had been given, none was broken; but if that aid, which our interests required, was not granted, ministers had equally neglected their duty. His noble friend (lord Grenville) had not said that the succour to be employed in making a diversion in her favor should amount to so large a force as 100,000 men. He only contended that ministers, having determined to send out a certain force, ought to have been directed to a different point from that to which it was actually sent. It would have threatened most formidable consequences to France, had the force sent out been landed on the south of Germany. Again, had it been sent to the north, what might not have been expected from it, acting in the rear of the French army, and combining and sustaining the scattered troops on that part of the continent? — With respect to Spain, he differed entirely from the noble earl. The case of Spain afforded the best opportunity of terminating the war with glory, and of shaking if not overturning the power of Buonaparté. The enthusiasm existing in that country could not be questioned, for nothing but enthusiasm could have kept armies still together, after so many defeats and disasters. That enthusiasm made Spain a lever, by which the power of France might have been removed from its foundation, an engine that might be put in action with the greatest force and effect against her. It was, therefore, the interest of this country to have identified herself with Austria, and shared with her every danger. But although we were not pledged to Austria, it would not be contended that we were not pledged to Spain. The pledge to Spain was not only given by parliament, but it was confirmed by the universal and

enthusiastic voice of the country. And how had that pledge been fulfilled? ministers sent an army to Portugal, with instructions, if one may judge from those, which transpired upon the inquiry into the Convention of Cintra, to deliver that country; and consider Spain as merely a secondary object. Sir Arthur Wellesley's army, however, did advance into Spain, and gained a victory; but although the stronger, and victorious army, it immediately retreated. The instructions of that gallant general were either erroneous and defective, or he had not the means to carry forward his victorious army. And what was still worse, two great Spanish armies, left to themselves, had been since successively cut to pieces, while a British army remained idle and inactive in their vicinity. After such scenes of calamity, their lordships would disgrace themselves and fail in their duty, if they did not adopt the course recommended by his noble friend who moved the amendment. The country at large was looking to the result of that night, and the House ought not to disappoint its just expectations. After the experience of last year, they had nothing to expect in the present one, but increased disasters, if the administration of affairs remained in the same hands. To reject the Amendment would be only to make their lordships parties to the shifts and evasions by which ministers sought to get rid of the subject.

Viscount *Sidmouth* could not but acknowledge, that there was much to regret, and perhaps much to reprehend, both in the expedition to Spain, and especially in that to Walcheren. He could not, however, bring himself to think, that the Amendment proposed by his noble friend was altogether unobjectionable. It appeared to him that it would condemn without inquiry. There was much of irritation, and much of depondency in the public mind at this moment, and the adopting such a proceeding would not tend to sooth the one, or to reanimate the other. He was a friend to moderation, and he trusted his conduct had shewn him to be a friend to justice on all occasions. In the present instance, a regard to justice and moderation would dissuade him from acceding to the Amendment as it now stood. The second paragraph of it was inadmissible at the present moment; it was for inquiry, but he did not see the necessity of coupling it with the Address to the crown in the manner proposed by the

Amendment. He wished an early day might be fixed for going into that inquiry, and he wished the inquiry to be full and rigorous; but he was not for prejudging the conduct of his majesty's government, which would be the case if the Amendment of his noble friend were adopted without any alteration.

Lord *Mulgrave* pointed out the difference of opinion which prevailed among the noble lords who were prepared to disapprove of the conduct of his Majesty's ministers, and was of opinion, that few of their lordships would be disposed to go the full length of the noble baron who had moved the Amendment. He never recollected any legislative measure resembling the proposition of condemnation previous to enquiry, which had been submitted to their lordships, except an act of parliament, which had once passed, by which it was enacted, that persons found poaching for game under certain circumstances, were to be flogged at a cart's tail; but a clause was added to this merciful act, that those who found themselves aggrieved thereby, might make an appeal to the next quarter sessions. In the same manner, it was now proposed first to punish by immediate condemnation his Majesty's ministers, and then to appeal to the House, to see whether they had deserved that punishment. The noble lord then proceeded to vindicate the operation of the campaign and the conduct of lord Wellington in Spain. He never was of opinion that the Spanish armies could stand against the veteran troops of France, but so long as Spain could persevere as a nation, so long the honour and the interest of this country rendered it our duty to support her. He contended that a great advantage had been obtained by this country in the destruction of the docks at Flushing, and that the expedition to the Scheldt was a preferable diversion to one sent to the north of Germany. With regard to the conduct of the war, he could safely declare, that no one was to blame, neither the ministers who planned the measures, nor the officers chosen to execute them. The failures had been the consequences of circumstances which no government could foresee, and which no commanders could controul or prevent. He hoped that before their lordships determined to call for any enquiry, they would wait to see what information the papers which were to be laid before the House would produce.

Earl *Grey* had to apologise for rising to



trouble their lordships, after what had been so ably said by the noble lords near him, and after such a defence, if defence it could be called, as that made by the noble lords on the other side. He never had been so much surprised in his life as he was at the tone assumed in the Speech from the throne, in alluding to what were stated to be successes achieved at Flushing and in Spain. When he considered too, that for what was called success in Spain, similar honours had been conferred on Lord Wellington, to those bestowed on the Duke of Marlborough, he could not help feeling at such unfounded assertions, that indignation in which he was convinced every English heart would participate. It was true, however, that ministers had not ventured to speak so boldly themselves in their defence; and he was glad to find, from their humbled and chastened tone in speaking in that House, that they appeared to feel some remorse for the numerous miseries they had inflicted by their imbecility and misconduct on their country. Had it been otherwise, he should have supposed that Almighty vengeance was hanging over this nation, and that therefore the hearts of its rulers had been hardened in proportion as their understandings were darkened.—He was afraid, in going over the arguments used by his noble friends, that he should rather weaken them than add to their force.—The noble earl (Harrowby) who spoke first, on the other side, was pleased to amuse himself with sarcasms upon the former Administration; and, in answer to the objection made, that no effectual diversion was made in favour of Austria, it was said, that no such diversion, on a prior occasion, had been resorted to in the case of Russia. If it were necessary, in a discussion of this character on the conduct of the present ministers, to enter on such a subject, it might be sufficient to say, that such a measure, if attempted at all on that occasion, must have been undertaken in the depth of winter, when the Baltic was frozen up, and when, therefore, its purpose could not have been accomplished. He was not surprised, that ministers resorted to such a flimsy and miserable expedient, indulging the hope, that by directing the attention of the House to other topics, they would render it less necessary to occupy themselves in the difficult task of their own defence. He was fully satisfied, that the conduct of those, with whom he had had the honour

to act at the period alluded to, was best calculated to promote the interest and welfare of the country. What had it been? It was to husband the resources of the state; that at a time when they should be most wanted they might be adequately and advantageously employed for the public security. Had such a discreet and prudent system of policy been adopted by the present ministers, the nation would not now have to deplore her treasures expended, the blood of her brave armies poured forth, and her gallant defenders suffering under the ravages of pestilence and disease. Had he had the honour of assisting in his majesty's councils, it was most highly probable, that he should have persevered in the plan he had before judged to be prudent, and he had seen nothing within the last seventeen months to lead his mind to a different view of the subject. But this was not the question now before their lordships; it was no inquiry into the propriety or wisdom of offensive and defensive warfare: it was notorious, that ministers had determined on the former, and upon the propriety of making a great effort upon the continent. The examination then was, whether, having adopted the offensive system, they pursued this scheme of their vigorous policy by the best means? Were the objects attainable, and, if attainable, were they material to the final result of the conflict, in which we were engaged? When he held the seals of the foreign department, the expedition to the Scheldt, which had been undertaken by the present ministers, had been frequently pressed upon him. He therefore turned his attention to it; and, after making every due enquiry, he was convinced that the object of destroying the arsenals at Antwerp and the shipping in the Scheldt, was not attainable. With regard to the Austrian war, he certainly would not have pledged himself against co-operation in it, though, as he said before, it was the duty of the government of this country to economise its means, in order to meet the probable demands of a protracted war, and the possible exigencies of home defence.—He would have said to Austria, however, in the event of her embarking in the war, that, if she thought war unavoidable, she should have such assistance as the situation of this country would admit; but after 17 years experience of wars, of battles which had been lost, and monarchies destroyed, the interests of this country re-

quired much caution and wise management, in the employment of our means. He would not, as he had heard had in the first instance been done by ministers, give a flat refusal of all co-operation or intercourse with Austria, until she should commence with an humble apology for the exclusion of the British flag from her ports in the Adriatic. This was a conduct so very absurd, that he could with difficulty believe that it had been adopted even by the present administration. He perfectly coincided with the noble earl (Harrowby) in his observations on the character of the ruler of France. Active in the pursuit of his main object, he would not be diverted from it by inferior considerations. But this practice was not only familiar to every great mind; but it was the vulgar maxim of early tuition, to master one difficulty before you undertake another. Conscious of this, ministers ought to have acted on the expectation of the adherence of Buonaparté to his invariable practice, and for this reason, the time, the place, and the occasion, ought to have been attentively examined before any expedition should have been determined upon. Their operations ought to have been conducted at a moment when he was most weakened; directed to the situation where he was most vulnerable; and executed during that seasonable opportunity when these advantages of time and place would have so co-operated as to have rendered success probable, if not certain. These were the principles to which they ought to have adhered, and it was upon these principles that their conduct ought to be tried. How, then, did the fact stand? when the ministers had at last determined on a continental effort, they chose the object which was perfectly unattainable, and which, had it been attainable, could have had no effect whatever on the general result of the war. The force of the country had been frittered into divisions, whereas to effect any great purpose it ought to have been made to act in a body. To borrow a phrase from the French republic, it should be "one and indivisible." The noble lord contended that an expedition to the North of Germany, or to the shores of the Adriatic, when contrary to all expectation, the fate of the war was balanced on the Danube, might have been undertaken with some prospect of success. But this was not the only theatre of successful warfare. All the North of Germany was in a state of revolt, and the people wanted only a sup-

ply of arms, and the appearance of a regular force to render them formidable to the common enemy. But to this project of operations in the North it was replied, that it would have been attended with great expence and serious difficulties in the transport of the troops, that would have been required for the service. He admired the perfect organs of vision ministers could employ for the discovery of objections to all the plans of others, and their utter blindness to those which were notorious in their own. Was it to be endured after the prodigality the servants of the crown had been guilty of, that they should hesitate at the expence of such enterprizes? Then, as to the transport of our troops to Piedmont or Trieste, and from the Thames to the Weser: could the ruler of France send to Egypt a powerful army? and would Great Britain, the mistress of the ocean, with 100 ships of the line, 1,000 ships of war of different proportions, and an incalculable commercial marine, be disappointed in such a purpose? It had been asked, how 100,000 men could have been provided for such enterprizes? Were not 40,000 employed in Walcheren, 15,000 in Sicily, and 45,000 in Spain and Portugal; and how much was then the deficiency of 100,000 men? Whether engaged in one, two, or three divisions, the difficulty of raising and paying such a force was much the same. He would, before he left this part of the subject, say a few more words on the engagement of a force in the North of Germany. He said, that so far back as the month of September, 1808, ministers had received proposals from the North of Germany, which shewed that very considerable bodies might be expected to rise in that quarter, in support of any diversion made there. He further believed from what followed, that encouragement was given to such a scheme. In that country many important situations might have been secured where the army could not have been incommoded by the Danes, and where a small force left on the shores of the Weser, would have prevented the possibility of any molestation from that quarter. Under the circumstances that had been explained, the acquisition of such a station would not have merely operated as a diversion, but if it were neglected by the enemy, the entire destruction of his army must have been the consequence. In the month of May or June this enterprize might have been undertaken; but he admitted that with all this appearance of advantage, it might

have been unsuccessful, yet on this occasion the evil was not, that adverse events had frustrated the schemes of ministers; but that measures had been pursued without a chance in their favour, and in which success was impossible. The noble lord next took a review of the campaign in Spain. He disapproved of the residence of Mr. Frere, as minister at the Junta, so long after it had been announced that he was to be recalled. A great deal was to have been done by a noble marquis (Wellington), whom he expected that night to have seen, not only countenancing his friends by his looks, but defending them by his eloquence. That noble marquis, however, whether from a negotiation with his majesty's ministers, or some other cause, had, after his appointment, remained for months in London, instead of proceeding to his post at Seville. He saw much to blame in the conduct of lord Wellington, in a military point of view. With regard to the battle of Talavera, he condemned that uncandid calculation, which represented it as a victory gained over an enemy double our force. When the Spanish army was taken into the account, the superiority was greatly on our side. The survey of the campaign in the Peninsula was followed by a luminous summary of the whole argument, and a pathetic appeal to the honour, wisdom, and humanity of the house, to relieve the country, if possible, by supporting the Amendment, from the accumulated disgrace and misery, which must inevitably be the consequence of the neglect of the high duties of parliament on this most serious occasion.

The Earl of *Liverpool* rose in reply to lords Grey and Grenville, and, in an able speech, went through and answered the topics of these noble lords. He observed, that the Amendment was unprecedented in parliamentary history. It first went to condemn certain measures, and afterwards requested an inquiry into them. It was completely the judgment of Rhadamanthus, *auditi castigatque*; by which the House might, if they adopted it, reduce themselves to this situation, that they might first condemn administration, and, upon investigation, it might turn out that there was no cause of blame. He next adverted to the operations of our army in Portugal and Spain, and insisted that they had been most beneficial for the interest of this country, and whenever the details came to be inquired into, he pledged himself to prove, that the conduct of our general and

army had been most wise and beneficial. He instanced as a proof, that the provinces of Estremadura, Galicia, and Asturias, had been completely cleared of the French forces, and although it was true that they had by surprize defeated two Spanish armies, yet they had not been able to gather any fruit from their victories, for they had not advanced one step.—With respect to the Expedition to Walcheren, his lordship admitted, that ministers knew of the Austrian armistice before it sailed, but he was ready to contend that it nevertheless operated as a favourable diversion for Austria. But it was not merely with that view that it had been undertaken. It had also other objects which were wholly British. It was known to be a favourite measure of our enemy to form a naval arsenal and dock at the mouth of the Scheldt, and it had been always admitted by professional men, that if an invasion of this country were ever to be attempted, it could never be effected but from the Scheldt. It was therefore an object of importance to defeat the views of our enemy, by destroying that port which he had with so much industry and at such great expence been preparing. And in this object we at least had succeeded; for, in the opinion of professional men, it would require much less time and expence to form a new harbour and arsenal than restore the one which we had destroyed at Flushing.—Nor was this the only object it had effected. It had been serviceable to Austria, for it had diverted to the Banks of the Scheldt, a large body of conscripts which were intended to have acted against her. And for that purpose he knew it was the desire of Austria that we should retain Walcheren until she made terms of peace, and bad and hard as those terms were for her, whoever compared the threats of Buonaparté with the terms which he afterwards granted, must admit, that some cause had reduced him to the necessity of relaxing from his threatened severity. His lordship declared, that in his opinion, it was occasioned by our holding Walcheren, and, in fact, that was the reason why we held it after the ulterior objects of the Expedition were known to be defeated, and expressly at the request of Austria. Some noble lords had said, that the destruction of Flushing was a conquest of no importance, and considered as such by the French Ruler. He would ask those noble lords, whether if the case could be reversed, and a French

fleet were to attack and destroy Sheerness, and afterwards make good their retreat, it would be considered by Buonaparté as a small triumph, or by us as a trifling defeat?

The question being loudly called for, the House divided on lord Grenville's Amendment; when the numbers were,

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*List of the Minority.*

**PRESENT.**

Dukes.	Say and Sele.
Gloucester	Hechester
Norfolk	De Clifford
Somerset	Ponsonby
Bedford.	Besborough
Marquises.	Upper Ossory
Lansdown	Waldegrave.
Stafford	Lords.
Headfort	Hawke
Argyle.	Moir
Earls.	Grenville
Spencer	Cassillis
Essex	St. John
Grey	Darnley
Jersey	Erskine
Lauderdale	Holland
Derby	Breadalbane
Rosslyn	Dringlas, Marquis
Cowper	Foley
Downshire	Yarborough
Albemarle	Carrington
Thanet	Somers
Suffolk	Ellenborough
Grosvenor	Lilford
Hardwicke	Carysfort
St. Vincent	Bolton.
Fitzwilliam	Bishops.
Oxford	Rochester
Bristol	Oxford.
Bulkeley	

**PROXIES.**

Dukes.	Duncan
Grafton	Anson.
St. Albans	Lords.
Devonshire.	Grey de Ruthyn
Marquises.	Blandford
Buckingham	King
Townsend	Montfort
Bute.	Stawell
Earls.	Braybrooke
Carlisle	Auckland
Shaftesbury	Mendip
Berkeley	Cawdor
Scarborough	Glastonbury
Cholmondeley	Dundas
Tankerville	Keith
Guildford	Crewe
Darlington	Southampton
Fortescue	Charlemont.
Ashburton	Bishops.
Carnarvon.	Linceln
Viscounts.	St. Asaph.
Hereford	

**HOUSE OF COMMONS.**

*Tuesday, Jan. 23.*

**THE LORDS' COMMISSIONERS SPEECH.]**

The Speaker acquainted the House, that he had been at the House of Peers, at the desire of the Lords Commissioners, appointed under the great seal, for holding this present parliament; and that the Lord High Chancellor, being one of the said Commissioners, made a Speech to both houses of parliament; of which, to prevent mistakes, he had obtained a copy; which he read to the House, (see p. 1.) After the Speaker had finished the Speech,

Lord Bernard said, he rose, relying upon that indulgence which the House usually afforded to persons placed in his situation, an indulgence which he hoped would not be refused to a first effort in debate. He trusted that the House would give credit to the principles by which his majesty had been guided in his conduct towards the fallen state of Austria; they were those upon which he had uniformly acted, whenever he had been called upon for protection and support. He was persuaded that the House would feel the exertions in the Austrian cause not unworthy of the character of the nation. Austria had entered into the contest, hurried on by the imperious pressure of the time. His majesty had extended a generous aid to her, without exposing the permanent interests of his people. It was satisfactory, too, to know, that, whilst his majesty regretted, in common with all his subjects, the disadvantageous peace, in which the war on the continent had terminated, his majesty had employed no means whatever to induce Austria to embark in it. The House would learn, and he trusted with interest and satisfaction, that the papers relative to the Expedition to the Scheldt were to be laid before them. On the subject of that Expedition, he observed, that the particular merits of the armament were not at present the subject of discussion; but though he lamented that the whole of its objects had not been accomplished, thus much he would say of it, that the advantages the country would derive from what had been effected, if not now generally acknowledged, would soon be generally experienced. The sentiments the king had thought fit to express to his parliament in this instance, were worthy of those he had upon all occasions entertained; he was beloved by his allies and dreaded by his enemies. While empires were sink-

ing, either by their own weight, or were hurled down by the rude hand of power, this country had defied the insults of ambition, and had remained uninjured amidst the calamitous desolation of the continent. His majesty's sentiments on the Spanish war were suited to his dignity. While that brave and martial people fought with the spirit and perseverance of freemen, he did not stand aloof; he offered his aid to their first exertions. In the day of their difficulties, he would not withdraw that aid which he had offered to their early cause.—It must be satisfactory to the House to know, that the temporary interruption of amity with America was not likely to embroil the two countries; the disagreement had been that of individuals; the nations had not been committed; and his majesty was still willing to take all fair and honourable means of upholding the spirit of friendship which ought to prevail between this great country and her allies. He concluded by moving an Address, which was, as usual, an echo of the Speech.

Mr. Peet, in seconding the motion, said, that he would not have obtruded himself upon the attention of the House, had he not been convinced that they would extend to him the candour, indulgence and patience granted on former occasions. In the course of his majesty's Speech, wherein he had taken a review of the events by which the interests of this and of other countries had been afflicted, his majesty had had the painful duty to lament, that the issue of the struggle of some of his allies, for liberty and independence, had but little corresponded with the hopes he had indulged; but it was some consolation to reflect, that the misfortunes could in no degree be attributed to the line of conduct his majesty had deemed it right to pursue. Austria, goaded by injury, and provoked by insult, had entered into a war without the advice of his majesty, where she had to fight, not merely for her national honour, but for her existence as an independent State. When she was called upon to acknowledge the right of a man to the crown of Spain, whose only title was usurpation, she found herself compelled to employ for her protection those troops that, in imminent expectation of hostility, she had collected round her throne.—No share of the disasters which occurred was to be imputed to her thirst of hostilities. It had been authoritatively intimated to her by France, that she must at once reduce her

forces; and the reduction was to be brought to a standard that would have made her powerless before the first enemy that willed to attack her. This was not to be done, while a sword remained in her hands, while she still retained a remnant of her vigour, while she could appeal to her people, and call on their loyalty and their feeling to aid her in the battle for their common security and glory. A new crisis appeared to be approaching. There were evidences before her eye of the vigour which might be displayed by a people in defence of their privileges. Spain was immediately within her view. She saw that great and unfortunate country rising against the treachery of France. She saw her suffering as she was, under all the visitations of a desperate and sudden violence, nobly rise and repel its ravage, prefer a glorious and uncertain struggle to a silent and dastardly dependence, and drive the invader before her rude heroism. Was it to be imputed as a folly to Austria, that she admired so glorious an example? Or as a crime to the British ministers, that they were anxious to give her strength and support to emulate its renown? Buonaparte had declared, that the fate of Austria depended on a single battle. He might have, with still more truth, acknowledged that his own destinies were<sup>\*</sup> balanced on the same doubtful and unfixed decision. It was then the season for giving our effectual aid. Subsidy had been given: but the aid of a generous people was to be more active. It was then that the utmost exertions were made by his majesty to complete an armament, which would, as much as possible, forward the general cause, by rendering assistance to the emperor of Austria. The question arose to what point it should be directed; some asserting that, without injury to Spain, we should concentrate all our disposable force, and land them on the coast of the Adriatic, whilst others insisted that the north of Germany was the point, where the scene of action should be laid. This was not a time for debating the merits or demerits of that expedition, and gentlemen would remember, that if they did enter into that question, they were not to make comparisons between what had actually been effected, and chimerical speculations of what might have been performed. They were to compare the design with the object attained, and not to stray towards plans that existed only in imagination, and which

never could be reduced to practice. They must contemplate also, the connection of events which it was not in the power of the wisest to controul. It was easy to feel the difficulties of what had been tried, and to imagine the facilities of what had been only projected: but wise men would judge according to another measure of reason—feel the essential difference between the solid impediments of an actual practice, and the smooth and fanciful progress of an untried theory. While the expedition was on the eve of sailing, intelligence arrived that damped the ardour of the warmest, and clouded the hopes of the most sanguine; but it still remained for his majesty to fulfil his part, and though one object might be lost, there remained one of importance to be attained. Austria suffered a defeat, but she was not undone: she had an armistice; she was still not unable to struggle, and struggle successfully for empire. The armament in the British ports might still protract the evil day. Even in the final defeat of Austria there was much to be done: it was not unsuited to a wise government to break a hostile force which was growing up on the opposite shores; there was no additional expence to be incurred; no further deduction from the strength of the British people. The force which had been assembled for the aid of Austria, was directed to the coasts and arsenals of the enemy; thus attracting the attention of the hostile forces, and at once operating an important diversion in favour of Austria, and an essential service to the security of Great Britain. After his majesty had turned his attention so unceasingly, to the interests of his Allies, it was natural that he should direct his views to an object that immediately affected the security of his own dominions. But the efforts made for the accomplishment of great objects in the north, had not withdrawn the vigilant attention of his majesty's government from the affairs of the Peninsula. There, too, every means had been resorted to for arresting the progress and defeating the objects of the enemy, and if entire success had not attended all the operations in Spain, it was solely attributable to the physical deficiencies of the country. He lamented the misfortunes of Spain. He felt a deep and painful regret at the evils which even the brave efforts of that devoted people had not been able to avert. There were evils in the constitution of that country which

might have made its energies feeble; but the British name had come pure out of the trial. The army of the empire supported the character of superiority, which they had, always upheld in the battles of their country. On the 22d of April, lord Wellington took the command of the British army. In May he drove marshal Soult before him, and rescued Portugal. He advanced into Spain. His advance was met by the force of France, under the immediate command of the person who called himself the king of Spain. In a bloody and unequal contest, he established, by one more brilliant evidence, the comparative bravery of the British soldier, and earned for his troops the just and well merited praise which we had been accustomed to give to our armies when they meet the enemy! That army retreated from the scene of its triumphs; but there was no shame in a retreat like theirs. We were still a civilized people; we had not learnt to discard our humanity; we had not yet reconciled ourselves to throwing off the burden of human feelings, that we might go on light and dexterous to the work of human misery. We could not adopt the summary expedients of modern war; we could not involve the wretched peasant in the calamities from which our own privation may spare him. We could not bring ourselves to force its bread from the lip of poverty; we could not feed upon requisition, and calculate our revenue upon plunder. Our army will not subsist where the troops of the enemy will riot. A British force could not glut on the wretchedness of a suffering people; a British army could not, on entering a plundered town, strip the miserable inhabitants of the scanty remnant which rapacity itself had left them. Whatever might be said of the British army in Spain, or of its commanders, it had afforded to that people a glorious example, which he hoped, in future days would be equalled, but could never be excelled.—To the affairs of America it might be indecorous for him in their present situation to advert, nor should he, after the observations in his majesty's Speech, enter into any inquiry as to the conduct of the Ministers. If the honour of the nation were at stake, however we might regret the revival of hostilities, or the injury to our trade, it could not be a matter of hesitation. But of the effects a war with America might produce upon the commerce of this country, we might be able to

form some judgment from former experience. During the embargo, the amount of the exports to and imports from the United States was unquestionably decreased, but this loss was amply counterbalanced by the direct trade carried on by our merchants to Spain and her dependencies. England desired neither peace nor war, but she would suffer no indignity, and make no unbecoming concessions. With every engine of power and perfidy against us, the situation of this country had proved to Buonaparté, that it was invulnerable in the very point to which all his efforts were directed. The accounts of the exports of British manufactures would be found to exceed, by several millions, those of any former period. With regard to our internal condition, while France had been stripped of the flower of her youth, England had continued flourishing, and the only alteration had been the substitution of machinery for manual labour.—The hon. member begged to be allowed to say a few words upon the nature of the Address he rose to second. In his opinion, it contained nothing which could prevent its unanimous adoption. It had been prepared to obviate all objection; it called for no pledge to approve of what had passed, and opposed no impediment in the way of inquiry; but he feared that some objection would, notwithstanding, be raised to it, for the aggression, usurpation, and tyranny of Buonaparté was the only subject upon which all parties united. But to resist him in his encroachments effectually, unanimity was absolutely necessary, and the nature of the contest in which we were engaged, required that every heart and hand should be joined to give strength to the common cause. He hoped, we should still be able, as we had hitherto been, to ride in safety through the storm that had destroyed the rest of Europe, and that we should still stretch forth a hand to succour those who were yet struggling for life against the angry waves. To be successful in that generous course he felt that they must be unanimous; he felt that there could be but one sentiment among the men to whom he addressed himself, and that that sentiment must do honour to themselves and to their country.

Lord Gower said, that in rising to move an Amendment to the Address which had been just read, he should state very shortly the reasons which prevented him from giving that Address his concurrence.

At the close of the last session of parliament, the public mind was led to expect that some great and well-timed efforts would be made for supporting Austria in the arduous but decisive struggle in which she was then engaged. How far it was politic in England to interfere with the continent, was a question for future discussion; but certainly, it could be no question, that when we did resolve to give assistance, we should give that assistance in a manner the most likely to prove effectual. At the same time, considering how much the country was loaded with taxes, the object to be attained should have been manifest, and the probability of success great. Whatever efforts were to have been made, should have been prepared with the most rigid attention to public economy, which the nature of the service would admit, or a due regard to the object to be attained, render practicable. Instead of such attention to economy, however, the most extravagantly expensive plans were formed, and the most extensive armaments fitted out, without one solid reason for supposing that they were such as could eventually tend to the relief of our allies: or to the promotion of the honour or the maintenance of the security of Great Britain. The point to which our assistance should have been directed, was another subject of the highest moment and deserving of the most mature consideration. Discontents had, about the close of last session, shewn themselves in many places, in the north of Germany and elsewhere. But in the mean time, the attention of ministers at home was directed to very different objects, to cabinet cabals and official intrigues, which brought disgrace and contempt on the character of the government. To take advantage of the demonstrations of a rising spirit of resistance to France, ought to have been our object; but, instead of that, we delayed our expeditions till the hopes of Austria were destroyed, and then sent them on destinations where our resources were squandered, our brave troops sacrificed, and all our enterprises attended with complete failure. Continued disgraces befel the country, and accumulated disasters marked the measures of its government; but of all our calamities, the unfortunate expeditions to Spain and Walcheren claimed a lamentable pre-eminence. The failure of the campaign of 1808, in Spain, seemed to have no other consequence than to induce

ministers to risk a repetition of its fatal issue by a renewal of the same blind confidence in the co-operation of the Spanish government and armies, and a recurrence to the same destructive policy. At that period, though we had brave troops, and good generals, still a superior force opposed to us, and a government aiding us by decrees which it was too weak to enforce, should have shewn us the impolicy of our operations. During the whole of the antecedent campaign, sir John Moore was never succoured by a single Spanish army; indeed, every day gave us more occasion to admire the valour and regret the fate of that lamented officer. All the skill and perseverance which he evinced were only sufficient to facilitate and secure the retreat of our ill-fated army. What was the result of this experience? Only to confirm our ministers in their infatuation; only to induce them to send fresh forces to a country where we had failed before, and to a government with which no previous arrangement had been made. We had not after that any evidence which could fairly induce us to suppose that any alteration had taken place in the conduct of the Spanish government. Even the pompous embassy of lord Wellesley proved abortive; that embassy which promised so much, and performed so little, returned, after a battle which was followed by a retreat; a victory which was marked with all the calamitous consequences of a defeat! (Hear, hear!) What a plan of campaign, he would ask, must that have been, when even victory led to an inevitable and disastrous retreat, in which our army was obliged to leave near 2,000 of its sick and wounded to the mercy of the foe, over whom we were said to have obtained a decisive victory.—He next came to the consideration of the expedition to the Scheldt: and certainly every thing had been done to make it one of the most formidable which ever left the shores of England. Its professed object was to create a diversion in favour of Austria, and yet, though for that great purpose, so much depended on expedition of equipment, it had not left our shores till the fate of Austria was decided. The objects that remained for it to accomplish were purely British, and tended neither to promote the common cause of the independence of Europe, nor to conciliate the respect and attachment of our remaining allies. But the inglorious result of that expedition had proved, that without meeting with any

other obstacles than such as might have been expected, it had returned crippled and diminished to our shores, without having effected any one object, but the miserable advantage of destroying the fortress and arsenals of Flushing; a result the most inglorious, the most inadequate of any this country ever witnessed, the most disgraceful when compared with such mighty preparations. In the dispatches of lord Chatham, we were told in almost as many words, that the plan was radically erroneous. He told us, that Antwerp, instead of being a weak defenceless town, was absolutely impregnable; that the ships had been moved out of the reach of attack, and that our force, great as it was, was insufficient for the attempt, and was daily diminishing by the diseases of that pestilential climate. This was the real state of things, very different from those notions on which the plans of ministers were formed; and accordingly his lordship prudently abandoned all further operations. But when this expedition was considered in the details of its consequences, we should find matter enough to fill every mind with horror and indignation. Its history would form one of the blackest, and most disastrous pages in the annals of England. When its objects, however, were confessedly unattainable, it was supposed by ministers that its immediate return would too strongly mark to the country the complete failure of their plans; and therefore they determined that our troops should remain, doomed to lingering destruction, in a climate notoriously pestilential and proverbially fatal. On this head they could not plead ignorance. There were two facts upon record, which if they had attended to their duty in the same degree that they had listened to the dictates of a vain and foolish ambition, must have opened their eyes to the frightful consequences of sending an Expedition, at that season of the year, to such a pestiferous climate. The late sir J. Pringle, a man who was remarkably eminent in the medical profession, had long ago published an account of the endemic diseases of Walcheren, which were most destructive to our arms in 1747, at which time the proportion of sick to the healthy was as four to one. What the proportion of sick was in the late Expedition remained yet to be ascertained. It was quite impossible that ministers could be ignorant of the fact, which had been thus stated, and he trusted that the country would hold them



answerable for the lives of those brave men that had been thus unprofitably wasted, after all hopes of ulterior success had entirely disappeared. He would only mention another proof of the known unhealthiness of Walcheren, and that was, that the Swiss troops formerly in the pay of the States General, always made it a stipulation that they should not be obliged to serve in Walcheren, at that very season when his Majesty's ministers determined to keep British soldiers in that country. He mentioned these things to shew, that had ministers possessed the most common information, they must have foreseen the calamities which pestilence and disease would bring upon our troops, if retained at Walcheren at that season of the year.—The noble lord then concluded a speech of very considerable force and strength of argument, by observing that he had confined himself to those two points of the policy of ministers, not from any want of other subjects of crimination, but from a conviction that these would fall into much abler hands. His only reason for occupying so much of the time of the House, and for which he had now to beg their excuse, was, that he might be able to assign his reasons for refusing to concur in the present Address, and in justification of the Amendment he had now to propose. The noble lord then proceeded to read the Amendment, and moved, That all the words of the paragraph relating to the Expedition to Walcheren after the word "that" be left out, for the purpose of inserting the following words: "We have seen with the utmost sorrow and indignation the accumulated failures and disasters of the last campaign, the unavailing waste of our national resources, and the loss of so many thousands of our brave troops, whose distinguished and heroic valour has been unprofitably sacrificed in enterprises, productive not of advantage, but of lasting injury to their country: enterprises marked only by a repetition of former errors, tardy and uncombined, incapable in their success of aiding our ally in the critical moment of his fate, but exposing in their failure his majesty's councils to the scorn and derision of the enemy.—That we therefore feel ourselves bound to institute, without delay, such rigorous and effectual inquiries and proceedings as duty impels us to adopt, in a case where our country has been subjected to unexampled calamity and disgrace."

The Hon. J. W. Ward said that he was the more anxious to trouble the House with a few words upon the question that was now before them, because it appeared to him that it was not only of great consequence in itself, but that the fate which it should experience, would, in a great measure, enable the country to judge as to the fate of all future questions, relating to the mismanagement of public affairs, and lead to some very important conclusions as to the temper and composition of parliament itself. For, if this House, agreeing in the proposition of the two gentlemen, who spoke first in the debate, should determine, after all the calamities that we have experienced, to present to the throne an Address, which is the mere echo of the words, which the authors of these calamities have thought fit to place in the mouth of their sovereign; if we express neither resentment at the past, nor anxiety for the future fate of the country committed to such hands; if we omit all those things that ought to form the main topics of an Address of the House of Commons, under circumstances of great public distress, and acknowledged weakness in the national councils, it will be a vain and hopeless task for me, or any man even to address you upon any similar occasion hereafter. If we do not act now we must be considered as having determined not to act at all; as having resigned ourselves implicitly to the guidance of any persons that may happen to be placed at the helm, and as having completely renounced that salutary controul, which we were once accustomed to exercise over the servants of the Crown.

The main point, Sir, to which the attention of the House will naturally be directed, is, the conduct of the war. Every person that now hears me must remember with grief that during the few months that have elapsed since the last session of Parliament, this country has been engaged in various military operation upon a most extensive scale, and that these operations have been attended by failure more complete, by loss more deplorable, and by disgrace more signal, than any that we find recorded, within an equal space of time, in the history of this or any former war, in which the country was ever engaged. This is the plain statement of the fact, which gentlemen may endeavour to extenuate, but which they cannot substantially contradict; and it is therefore for us to consider how far

these things affect the character and pretensions of those persons who then were, and who for the greater part still are, entrusted with the management of affairs. And if upon a review of these transactions, it should appear to us, that we have reason to impute our misfortunes to the misconduct of our rulers, it will become us, not only to institute an immediate, vigilant and severe enquiry, but at once to carry our suspicions to the foot of the throne, and humbly to represent to his Majesty, that we no longer feel ourselves able to rely on those persons, whom he has chosen to be his advisers.

But before we proceed, as we must proceed hereafter, to look at these questions in detail, I must in the first place remark, that the very magnitude and number of those failures which have disgraced their administration, do alone form a strong *prima facie* case against his Majesty's ministers, even independently of all consideration of the particular circumstances by which they were attended. For though it is unjust and absurd to say, that failure necessarily implies blame, and though enterprizes the most wisely planned, and the most skillfully executed may fail, from causes which human wisdom can neither foresee nor controul; yet constant repeated invariable failures do create a fair presumption of misconduct, and if that presumption is coupled with any thing suspicious or unfavourable in the history and composition of the administration itself, it becomes almost irresistible. It would be an insult to the understandings whom I have the honor to address, if I were to spend a moment in endeavouring to elucidate a principle which is so evidently consonant to reason and experience, and a thousand of which, must at once present themselves to the mind of any person who gives himself the trouble to think at all upon the subject. How then, does it apply to the case of his Majesty's ministers? Why, Sir, it appears that during the last seven or eight months they have failed in no less than three great and deliberate designs; that, if we extend our view a little further, we shall conclude the campaign which terminated in the death of sir John Moore, which again was preceded at no long interval by the Convention of Cintra. So that, on the whole the result is this; that during the time they have conducted his government, his Majesty's ministers have attempted every thing, every where, on the largest pos-

sible scale, and that in every thing they have failed; except indeed in that instance in which they directed his arms not against his enemies but against his allies. Entrusted with the largest means and with the most unbounded confidence, thanks to the liberality and to the folly of the people of England, they have proceeded to engage in the mightiest enterprizes, and these enterprizes have all had either a ludicrous, or a disastrous termination. Now, Sir, I say that to maintain, that accident has been every thing, and misconduct nothing, in these transactions, is to maintain, that a species of miracle has been worked against us.—Accident may account for some detached failures in the course of a long administration; but a man must have a high opinion indeed of the King's servants, and must moreover have an understanding most singularly constituted, who can persuade himself that the Convention of Cintra, the miserable expulsion of our army under sir John Moore, the ludicrous capture of Ischia and Procida, the second useless, expensive and destructive campaign in Spain, and to crown all, the expedition to Walcheren; that all these things following each other with the utmost rapidity, not a single success intervening to break the chain of calamity, happened by pure ill luck, and without the smallest of blame to the wisest and best, but most unfortunate of administrations.

And then, Sir, in whose favour is it that we are required to believe this paradox? Is it in favour of a firm united government, guided by some person of acknowledged abilities, and directing an undivided attention towards objects of great public concern? No, Sir, we are required to believe in favour of a government of departments, at the head of which till lately, stood a nobleman of no very distinguished talents, enfeebled by age and suffering, and labouring ineffectually during the latter days of his life, to keep together the discordant parts of a precarious administration; we are required to believe it in favour of a cabinet, the members of which, entertained for each other the most profound contempt, or the most deadly antipathy; we are required to believe that an unremitting attention was paid to the interests of the state by ministers, whose time, (as we have since learnt by documents which are in every man's hands, and ought to be imprinted on every man's recollection,) was spent

in dark machiavelian intrigues, in personal discussions, and in devising schemes for parcelling out the great offices of state, which they seem to have considered as a private inheritance to be divided for their common benefit, not as a solemn trust to be administered for the public good. We are required to believe in the fitness of those who had pronounced upon each other's incapacity; and it is from discord at home and disgrace abroad, that we are to infer wisdom and good conduct.

For my own part, Sir, I am content to direct my view of the case by those plain concurring rules, that guide men in their judgments upon the ordinary affairs of life, who wherever they see disunion, are apt to suspect weakness; who where they observe constant failures and mistakes, always presume ignorance, incapacity or neglect. Therefore, when I call to mind the ignominious history of their internal dissensions, when I see that their whole administration has been one uniform tissue of calamities, a foul and detestable blot in the annals of the country, to which Englishmen in future days will look back with humiliation and grief, I do not hesitate to declare my unalterable conviction, that such a government was unworthy to possess the confidence of Parliament; and that a government which differs from it chiefly by the loss of those talents for business and debate, which formed its great ornament, and which is a little more united, at the price of being a great deal weaker in all other respects, is unfit to carry on the affairs of state at any time and particularly at this, and that it is the duty of every member of this House, and the interest of every man who is concerned in the preservation of the country, to contribute by all lawful means to its subversion.

This, Sir, is the opinion which I think it is natural to form upon a first view of the subject; and sure I am, that the more closely we look into it, the more it is sifted and examined, the more reason we shall have to condemn the late administration, to distrust the present, and to refuse our assent to an address of confidence, such as that which was originally proposed.

The first thing which presents itself for examination, both in point of time, and in point of importance, is the campaign of Spain and Portugal. This subject has the advantage of being plain in itself, and the circumstances of it are already before

the public, so that the House is, even now, in a situation to form a competent judgment upon the merit of its authors. The only difficulty consists in accounting for the conduct of the government upon any tolerable theory whatever. For, Sir, I must fairly confess that I am not unable to see any good reasons, but that I am equally unable to see any reasons at all, that could have induced his Majesty's ministers to engage in this second campaign. It seems to have been undertaken in singular defiance of all those principles that ought to enter into the conduct of affairs. Before men determine upon any important step, they commonly look to experience, and to authority, where they have had the benefit of experience, and where good authority can be obtained. His Majesty's ministers had both, and of the most perfect kind, and they chose to act in direct contradiction to both. They had the complete and melancholy experience of the first campaign in Spain, in which we lost so many thousand men, in which our councils, though not our arms, sustained such deep disgrace, and which afflicted and dismayed the country beyond almost any other event of this calamitous war. We had seen how in the course of that campaign, our army suffered more than it could have suffered in a country decidedly hostile, that it was received with jealousy and unwillingness, and that its presence, instead of rousing the Spaniards to greater efforts by an increased prospect of success, seemed only to chill whatever enthusiasm might have been supposed to exist among them before. In every stage of the transaction we were treated, not like zealous and sincere allies, guided by a liberal, though perhaps mistaken policy, but like dangerous interested intruders, against whose designs it was as much their duty to guard, as against the ambition of France itself. Every thing seemed to forbid a second experiment; the characteristic qualities good and bad of our own army, the nature of the country, and above all the disposition of the inhabitants. If, indeed, that splendid but ideal picture, which at the beginning of the Spanish revolution, some persons in this country had formed to themselves, of a whole nation rising up as one man in defence of its liberty, had been realized, if in the first instance we had met with a zealous and efficient aid, proportioned to their utmost means; if we had been welcomed by a cordial disposition towards

the only people in the world that had stretched out its arm to assist them in the hour of their need: if we had found them animated by an ardent and unextinguishable desire of national independence and prepared to make all those sacrifices which were necessary, in order to afford the slightest chance of success, in so vast and so unequal a struggle, why then, Sir, it would have perhaps been right, and certainly the best feelings of our nature, compassion and the love of freedom would have prompted us, in spite of failures, and in spite of misfortunes, to make one more effort in behalf of a generous, a grateful, and a suffering nation. One should have felt some consolation for the blood that had been already spilt, and one might without a crime to the country, have consented that yet more should be shed, in what might then fairly have been deemed a sacred cause. But the conduct of the Spaniards soon dissipated this illusion, and made it our right and our duty, to guide ourselves by the principles of a colder and more deliberate policy. Instead of gratitude or enthusiasm, all we met with was a bare preference of England to France, in a choice of evils, a mere inclination to expel their invaders, if it could be done without the expence and trouble of adopting the necessary means; all we obtained from them was the gracious, though somewhat tardy permission of the Supreme Junta, to waste as many lives and as much treasure as we pleased in their defence. Sir John Moore was ordered to advance, and make common cause with the Spanish nation. He did advance, but the Spanish nation seemed to dwindle away as he approached, and on all those innumerable armies of Patriots on which he was taught to rely, not one ever appeared, except, indeed that name is to be bestowed upon a few miserable bands of fugitive peasants, who crossed his way, interrupted his march, and encumbered him with fresh difficulties. Help and co-operation were out of the question, but we did not even command the sympathy and good will of those whom we were sent to assist. And this was the flattering result, and these the encouraging circumstances which induced his Majesty's ministers to send another army to be expelled from Spain. So much for experience. As to authority, that too, as far as we have the means of knowing, was equally against them. In the first place they had the authority of

one of the best officers, and one of the ablest men this country ever produced, the Commander in that Expedition, who in all he said, in all he did, in all he wrote, in his life, and by his death, bore uniform testimony against the whole system of depending upon the Spaniards, and of assisting Spain by means of an army to be marched into the interior of the country. One would have imagined that the opinion of such a man, upon such a question, would have been decisive, when opposed by nothing of equal might. But if any person is inclined to except against his testimony, I am almost willing to forego any advantage that I might have derived in arguing this question from the known and recorded sentiments of Sir John Moore. Be it, that he was over-cautious, desponding, guided by a pedantic attachment to regular troops, and regular warfare; be it that he admired the military genius of Buonaparté, while he was slow to discern that of the marquiss Romana; be it that with unpardonable coldness and scepticism, he doubted the zeal of the inhabitants of Madrid, and the unshaken patriotism of Don Thomas Morla. Let all the foolish objections, let all the foul calumnies avail, that have been invented in order to blacken the memory of this illustrious man, who fell a victim to the folly and impracticability of the design in which he was engaged. But setting him aside, what were the opinion of all the other officers who served upon that Expedition? They surely were not all incapable of forming a judgment; they did not all labour from beginning to end under the influence of invincible prejudices and incurable despondency. And did any one of them, if they were consulted, advise a second experiment? I do not speak from certain information, but I believe not one. The opinions of some among them are recorded along with those of Sir John Moore, and, as far as they go, they perfectly coincide with the sentiments he had expressed. Nay I am persuaded one might go yet farther, and defy his Majesty's ministers to produce the name of a single officer of rank or character in his service, who either advised the second campaign, or who would be willing to stake any part of his reputation, upon the merit of that advice. I know not what there is to put into the opposite scale. Perhaps indeed one may form some idea of the nature of the informa-

tion upon which his Majesty's ministers proceeded, from that of the agents whom they spread over the face of the peninsula, and who were understood to maintain a correspondence with the government at home. These missionaries were for the most part military men, not very high in the profession, and who were of course delighted, with the honours they received, and the consequence they derived, from their situation as the agents of the British government. It was natural enough that persons of this description, and that too without imputing to them any criminal or deliberate dereliction of their duty, should represent only the fair side of things, that they should give a little colouring to whatever was good, and extenuate all that was discouraging. Indeed one could not expect, (so long as it was possible to put a favourable construction upon events, or to distinguish a single ray of hope) that they should transmit home accounts which would not only be disagreeable to their employers, but fatal to their own prospects, and the effect of which they might reasonably apprehend would be, to put an end to all their activity and importance, and recall them at once from the dignified occupation of composing proclamations and dispatches, to the humble routine of regimental duty. I do not wish to speak harshly of persons who acted to the best of their very moderate abilities, and who ought not to incur any share of that blame which is exclusively due to the government that employed them. They even deserve praise for their activity and spirit, but I really believe that out of the whole number there was scarce a cool-headed sound-judging man, scarce one whose opinion was much better having, than that of the famous col. Charmilly himself. Yet it appears that the authority of these gentlemen weighed more with his Majesty's ministers (supposing them to have paid any regard to authority at all) than that of all those persons whose deliberate disinterested opinion as to the chance of success, and the nature of the aid to be expected from the Spaniards, was formed upon actual service, and the actual trial of that experiment which they were about to repeat. The opinion of col. Carrol stood on one side, the opinion of Sir John Moore stood on the other, and they preferred col. Carrol.

The only way in which they could justify themselves for undertaking this second

Expedition, would be by shewing, that some such change had taken place in the situation of Spain, or in the disposition of its inhabitants, as might fairly entitle them to expect a different result. If there was any such change, it is for them to explain it. On the contrary, every thing that happened in the interval appears to me to corroborate the lessons we might have learnt from the first melancholy transaction. It was no longer possible to mistake the character of a revolution, the disgraceful peculiarity of which was, that it had not produced a single individual eminent, either as a soldier or a statesman. The Spanish armies were every where defeated, and often outnumbered, for it is worthy of remark, that the "universal Spanish nation" out of a population of twelve millions, and in a cause in which we were told that every heart was engaged, and every hand would be raised, was never able to bring much above a hundred and twenty thousand men into the field. The flight of the Junta to Seville, had not cured them of the inactivity they had displayed at Aranjuez. Of all their enemies the press was the only one they had been able to subdue; they had done nothing for the people, and nothing to enlighten the people; the councils of Charles 4th, were never disgraced by weakness more contemptible, or by tyranny more odious. Was it the healthy climate of Estremadura, then, encouraged them to send an army there in the height of summer? Was it the success of the battle of Medellin that induced them to rely on the discipline of the Spanish troops, and the skill of their generals? Had it not become every day more evident, that the Spanish government, choked up by the lumber of its ancient institutions and forms, had sunk into a lethargy from which it was vain to think of rousing it? Had we not reason to expect that these errors were not mere errors of weakness and ignorance, but that a base intriguing spirit had mixed itself, in the councils of these self-called patriots, and completed their incapacity for all useful and generous exertion? And that our ministers were not the only ministers in the world that were thinking of their own interests and feelings, when they ought to have been thinking how to save a fallen state? No change could be expected in such a government, except from some great effect of the people itself. And what symptom was there,

that a people divided into provinces differing from each other so much in manners and feelings, and unaccustomed to communication for a general object; that a people bowed for whole ages under the yoke of superstition and tyranny, would be able to accomplish that of which the most united and the most enlightened nations are hardly capable; that they would be able at once to perform the double task of establishing a vigorous executive government, and of expelling an enemy from the heart of their country? And yet without such a change, how was it possible to hope for success? I had almost said, how was it possible to wish for success? What could be expected from men, who at a moment when their capital and their strong places were in the hands of the French, and half their provinces overrun by the armies of Buonaparté, were rummaging their archives with all the curiousness of antiquarian research, in order to find precedents relative to the meeting of a representative assembly, which was not to be held till long after the time when, at their rate of proceeding, the representatives, the places they were to represent, the place where they were to meet, the antiquarians, the archives and all, would be involved in one common destruction. Whilst Victor was upon his march to fight the battle of Medellin, they were speculating at leisure upon what form of government would suit them best, when England, or chance, or a miracle, or any thing but their own exertions, should have driven the French across the Pyrenees. And this, Sir, instead of instant remedies for present evils, instead of war and finance, instead of seeking how to draw a revenue from the provinces that still remained, with the least possible pressure upon the people; how to raise and discipline their armies, how to support their allies; and above all, how to give to every man what no man now has, a direct and palpable interest in the result of the struggle. And yet, Sir, it was with all these circumstances full in their view, that his Majesty's ministers determined to send an Expedition to Spain, the success of which, supposing that it could succeed at all, depended wholly upon the zealous aid, and the friendly disposition both of the people and government of Spain.

Perhaps it may be said that the renewal of the war in Germany, gave a new turn to affairs, and called upon us to try at least,

whether, by sending another army to the peninsula, we could not either rescue Spain from the grasp of the conqueror, or compel Buonaparté to dispatch some part of that force with which he was preparing to overwhelm Austria. If so, why was the force we sent so small? Why was it upon a scale so ridiculously disproportioned to that upon which the operations of war are now carried on in Europe? If the ministers really thought any thing was to be done in that quarter, why were not those armies which at the same time we were idly wasting upon visionary and exploded projects, concentrated in Spain and Portugal, in order by one great effort to drive the French across the Ebro? No, Sir, we preferred sending ten thousand men to view the Italian shore, and thirty thousand men to wage war with the fever in Holland, while with five and twenty thousand men, that is, with about half the smallest number Buonaparté ever maintained in that country, we undertook to reconquer Spain. If they say that the country was not capable of maintaining so large a number of troops, why then, I answer that though that may be an excellent reason for sending no army at all, it is no reason for sending an army which was quite inadequate to any useful purpose. The choice was not between the measure itself and half the measure, but between the measure itself, and some other measure of a different nature.

The fundamental error which, as I conceive, pervaded the whole of our operations with respect to Spain, consisted in supposing that the Spanish troops were capable of acting in conjunction with ours. Now, Sir, I apprehend, that if there is any point more clearly established than another, both by the events of sir John Moore's campaign, and by every other species of evidence, it is this, that the Spaniards neither had a regular army, nor any thing that was capable of co-operating with a regular army, and that whenever the French chose to concentrate their force, at the risque of rising in that part of the country which such a movement would compel them to abandon, and which they might easily re-occupy when they had obliged us to retire; they would meet with very little opposition from our allies, and that we should virtually have to contend with them single-handed. In fact the very nature of the two descriptions of force rendered it impossible that

they should act in conjunction. Their troops newly raised and quite undisciplined, but acquainted with the country, inured to the climate, and patient of fatigue, were best calculated to act in small detachments, which might be frequently defeated without affecting materially the fortune of the war. Our troops, steady and intrepid, but unused to scarcity, privation, excessive hardships, and the vicissitudes of the climate, could only act with effect in large masses, where a great event might be decided at once by superior valour and skill. The object of the Spaniards was delay, both in order to discipline their own troops, and to give the French time to feel the effects of the climate; our object was to bring on an immediate and decisive action, before we felt the effects of it ourselves. If the Spaniards could do any thing, it was in a war of detail, that is to say a war in which regular troops, acting in a foreign country, can do absolutely nothing. In a general engagement it was utterly impossible to depend upon our allies. And indeed it is but just to remark, that we had no reason to be surprised that the Spaniards had no troops fit to co-operate with ours, and to meet the French in the open field. The execrable government which had so long prevailed, had ruined and degraded the whole military establishment, just as it had ruined and degraded every thing else that was necessary for the honour and security of the country. Now we all know that a regular army is not a thing to be created upon the spur of the occasion. Time, labour, practice, system, and above all a long-continued vigorous executive government, are necessary in order to bring this vast and complicated machine to any tolerable degree of perfection. And though the Junta was no doubt highly culpable in not adopting vigorous measures with a view of that object, yet the fact is, that even if they had been adopted, they would have been too recent to produce much effect; and the folly of the Spanish government in neglecting to improve their means of defence, is hardly greater than that of the English ministry, who acted as if a regular army was existing at a time, and under circumstances, in which reason and experience might have told them no regular army could exist.

The House will observe that the few remarks I have taken the liberty to address to them have been directed exclusively

to the plan of sending another army into Spain, that is to say, to that part of the question with which his Majesty's ministers are more immediately concerned. I shall say nothing as to the conduct of the campaign, though I am aware it is liable to many and serious objections, but I wish to leave the discussion of a military question in fitter hands than my own. I shall only beg the House to recollect, that up to the battle of Talavera the ministers have made themselves sharers in the responsibility for every thing, by the honours they advised his Majesty to confer on sir Arthur Wellesley. By this they expressed in the strongest possible manner their approbation of his advance into Spain, and by the merits or demerits of that step they must be content to stand or fall along with their general.

I cannot however quit this part of the subject without also observing, that the events of the campaign have been in a remarkable manner calculated to shew the erroneous views upon which the authors of it proceeded. If sir Arthur Wellesley had been defeated they might excuse themselves by saying; "this is the fortune of war, which it is impossible to controul. All a government can do is to entrust the execution of wise plans to skilful generals and brave troops. This is what we did, and if our success in the field had answered to our reasonable expectations, the happiest and most glorious result would have ensued." But how does the case actually stand? Why that in a very short time, we defeated the French at Oporto, and afterwards at Talavera, in those battles for which sir Arthur Wellesley was raised to the peerage; that the valour of Englishmen never shone more conspicuous than upon both those occasions, and that more was achieved by our troops than would have been achieved under similar disadvantages by an equal number of any other nation in the world. And yet such was the original absurdity of the whole plan, that these successes, upon which the highest honours and the highest panegyrics have been bestowed, were attended with no permanent advantages whatever, that they left the cause of Spain and of Europe just as desperate as they found it, and that in their consequences they resembled not victories but defeats. For by what more disastrous consequences could defeat have been followed, than by a precipitate retreat; by the loss of two

thousand men left to the mercy of the enemy, upon that spot upon which they had just fought and conquered, but fought and conquered in vain, that spot which as it were in mockery to them we have endeavoured to perpetuate in the name of their general? By what worse could it have been followed than by the loss of all footing in Spain, the ruin of another army and the virtual renunciation of all the objects of the war? As the species of glory increases, our real power and resources diminish, and by the time we have gained a few more battles, and elevated a few more generals to the peerage, our army will be fairly worn out, and not a spot will be left on the continent of Europe on which an Englishman can set his foot. If the battles which our ancestors fought a century ago, and by which they vindicated the liberties of Europe, had been attended with consequences like these, and if such had been the nature of success in their days, France, instead of being humbled, would have become the mistress of the world, and England instead of dictating the terms of peace, would have sunk under the weight of her own victories. But they were far other men, and guided by far other maxims, in foreign and in domestic affairs; in peace and in war. We are told of one of the most eminent persons of that age, (and I mention it because it forms a curious contrast to what we have just seen) we are told of that great general, and politician King William III., that such was the skill with which he planned his campaigns, that even when he lost a battle it was not attended by any fatal consequences to him, and that he was soon able to appear again upon an equal footing with his enemies. Our plans are of a different kind. We so contrive a campaign that the loss of a battle would be attended with utter destruction, we do not advance one single step nearer to our object by gaining one. Give to us success in the field, give to the British troops all that glory which is to be derived from the heroic valour, and unparalleled exertions of every individual of whom they are composed, and still our situation, instead of becoming better, is infinitely worse than it was before, and with the honours of a victorious, we experience the fate of a beaten army. It was the art of the great man whom I have mentioned, to render defeat harmless, it is the art of ministers and generals of these days to make victory itself unavailing.

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If we had possessed a wise government, skilful in procuring the best information, and firm enough to act upon it, instead of calculating its measures upon the vulgar ignorant cry of the moment, we probably never should have heard even of the first campaign in Spain. But supposing that another opinion might have been reasonably entertained upon that subject, and that it was necessary both for their own satisfaction, and for the satisfaction of the country, to try at least whether a British army might not have been employed with effect in aid of the Spaniards; still, when the history and result of that campaign were known, and when the novelty of the case and ignorance of the real state of the country could no longer be pleaded as an excuse, how any man should have advised a second is almost unintelligible. If, indeed, the plan had proceeded from some of those romantic persons, for such these were, whose imaginations heated upon this subject had completely extinguished all the other faculties of their minds, one should not have been surprised. But, that, to do them justice, was neither the character nor the feeling of his Majesty's ministers, least of all for instance of the noble lord, who then presided over the war department; a man of a calm mind, not liable so far as I know to be infected with the contagion of popular enthusiasm, not a person whom the mere name of patriotism was likely to transport into any acts of imprudent zeal, or who might be expected to make immoderate sacrifices in the cause of national independence. We must, therefore, look for some other explanation of the conduct of the noble lord and his colleagues, and the explanation of it, I believe, is to be found, and to be found only in that vague determination to do something, no matter what, and to keep the public force employed, no matter how, which formed one of the main principles, and let me add, one of the most mischievous principles of their administration; that principle too upon which they were most directly and most ostentatiously committed against their opponents. It is this which has been to them instead of prejudice, instead of enthusiasm, instead of folly, and which has precipitated them into all those acts which more resemble the desperation of a losing gamester, than the deliberate plans of a government.

To that principle we owe that other great event of the last year, the Expedi-

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gram, which, if he lost these things, would form but a slight aggravation to the calamity, which if he gained, the re-taking of a few towns, and the re-building of a few ships would be an easy task to a man who would then wield, at pleasure, the whole moral and physical force of Europe.

But if they really entertained any hopes of saving Austria, did it never occur to them that there was a point to which a force might be sent with a greater chance of success than to the coast of Holland? Did it never occur to them, that in the north of Germany, we should have been nearer the seat of war, and that our appearance would have told more directly upon the operations of Buonaparté? Did they not know that we should have found a people, (of whose dispositions, indeed, we have since had such convincing proofs during the singular and well conducted retreat of the Duke of Brunswick), a people eager in the cause, and anxious for our aid; and by directing our efforts to that quarter we should have shewn, what it was most important to shew, a disposition to attend to the main objects of the war, singly, and without any mixture of views exclusively our own, and resulting from a more contracted system of policy. One should not have been surprised, indeed, if a different view of this subject had been taken by a government differently composed, but it is really singular that the persons then in power should have acted upon any other. We all remember, how, upon a former occasion, when out of power, what they termed, the neglect of administration to send assistance to a much more remote point, and under circumstances certainly far less favourable, formed the never failing topic of their invectives for two whole sessions. To that neglect they constantly attributed the loss of the battle of Eylau, the peace of Tilsit, the alienation of Russia and the final submission of Europe. Those persons who then gave credit to them have now an opportunity to judge of their sincerity by their conduct under somewhat similar circumstances. Austria resolves to make a last effort; the people of the North of Germany only wait for our arrival as the signal of insurrection; and what is the conduct of his Majesty's ministers? They consult some persons who actually are smugglers, and some others who have at one time been engaged in that honourable profession, and guided by their advice and authority, they send half our army and

half our navy to the swamps and sandbanks of Holland, and in the meantime Austria perishes, without a single Englishman having appeared in arms on any spot where he could render her the smallest aid. And these are the gentlemen from whom we heard so much about the loss of character we sustained by our selfish conduct upon a former occasion; and what is the way they took to re-establish our character? They avail themselves of the absence of the French armies in Germany to undertake an Expedition, which, be the merits of it in other respects what they may, was a plan of mere British insular policy, in the success or failure of which no continental nation had the smallest interest. The only object of these magnanimous and enlightened statesmen is, instead of making common cause with Austria, to extract some trifling advantage to ourselves from the final destruction of the only other power in Europe that still preserved even the shadow of independence. The consolation that they prepared for Austria in her fate was, that by her last efforts she had purchased some ships for England, that she had saved England the expence of a blockading squadron, and perhaps even enabled England to establish an advantageous depot for the sale of her contraband goods.

Let me, however, be clearly understood upon this point. I by no means agree with the opposition of that day, in thinking that an army ought to have been sent to Prussia just before the battle of Eylau, nor am I, by any means, persuaded that a single man ought to have been sent to the north of Germany last spring. I am rather inclined to believe that the case was desperate from the beginning, that no efforts we could have made would have saved Austria from destruction, and that a campaign in Germany would have ended like a campaign in Spain. But what I contend is, that if an army was to be sent anywhere, every consideration both of prudence and of magnanimity pointed out Germany and not Holland as its destination, and that his Majesty's ministers were more particularly bound to that line of conduct, both by their own system and their own professions.

But suppose there existed no other ground of complaint; suppose the expedition to Wal heren had been wisely planned in all other respects; suppose the execution of it had been entrusted to some officer, whom long experience, tried abili-

ties, and distinguished success more particularly pointed out for the situation. Still there remains behind a completely fatal objection, upon which I have not yet touched, but which ought alone to draw down upon the ministers the severest indignation of the House. Gentlemen, I am sure, have anticipated me; I mean that singular perverseness, with which they pitched upon the most unhealthy season of the year, to send an Expedition to the most unhealthy place in Europe; Badajos, perhaps, excepted, where our other army was stationed. I do not wish to appeal to the feelings of the House by drawing a picture of all that our army suffered upon that fatal spot. I merely wish to direct their attention to a dry statement of the case. Five thousand men dead, and about as many more ruined in their health and rendered completely incapable of service; and all this owing to the most profound ignorance of the most obvious and most material facts. It is really a thing so unaccountable, and so unlike the conduct of any moderately intelligent men, that if it had not happened in our own time, and within the immediate scope of our own observation, we should hardly have thought it credible. Did then a British Ministry, deliberating upon an expedition, on which forty thousand men were to be employed, wholly omit to enquire whether the spot to which they were to be sent was healthy or not? Did it never occur to them that a low marshy spot might be unfavourable to the human frame, particularly in the summer or autumn months? Did none of the persons, whom they must have consulted upon other points, even drop a hint as to this? Did none of the thirteen members of the cabinet even open the commonest book upon the subject? Or were they possessed of complete information? Did they foresee and calculate upon the loss, and determine to incur it for a certain glory and advantage that was to ensue? Was this their scheme of policy? Did they deliberately resolve to expose a whole British army, the finest the country ever sent out, to the effects of a pestilential disease, and that for the sake of seizing a few ships and destroying an arsenal? They are in a dilemma from which it is impossible for them to extricate themselves. Either they were wholly ignorant of the nature of the country which was to be the scene of their exploits or they were not; if they were, how scandalous their neglect; if they were not, how wanton their cruelty.

And this, Sir, naturally leads me to consider the last act of this tragedy, that deplorable instance of utter incapacity for the management of affairs—the manner in which this expedition was abandoned. This is an error which is not to be imputed to either of those persons who have since retired from office. It was the act of the government nearly as it is now composed, and may therefore be considered as no unfair specimen of their administration. For two months those persons, to whose care and wisdom England is now confided, were utterly unable to determine whether they should evacuate the Island of Walcheren or not; two months during which the British Army was daily perishing by disease. Whether this interval was spent in consulting naval and military authorities, or in settling disputes among themselves, I know not, nor is it material to enquire, but this much is clear, from the orders and counter-orders they issued, (one day sending workmen to build fortifications, another day sending transports to take away the troops), that it was spent in a state of vacillation and uncertainty, which would be ridiculous in any ordinary transaction of life. Nor was it till the change of the season had somewhat abated the malignity of the climate; until we had, as it were, taken the benefit of the fever from beginning to end, until the powers of destruction had worn themselves out, and nature had ceased to make war against us, that they, at last, consented to relieve the British Army from that charnel house to which it had been condemned. One would have thought that even if they were blind to all considerations of policy, even if they had no regard to the country suffering under the consequences of their rashness and precipitation, still the common feelings of humanity would have compelled them to come at once to that determination which every reasonable man foresaw they must ultimately adopt. One would have thought that some compassion would have touched them, for thousands of their countrymen, whose fate depended upon their will; one would have thought that the minister, who was also general upon that expedition, would have instantly, and earnestly asked for his army, that release which had been so early granted to himself, from the further prosecution of a desperate and fatal design; one would have thought that some one among them, would have been found to represent to a compassionate and benevolent sovereign the real magnitude of this evil,

to implore him to put an end to this period of disaster, and to remind him how unseemly and ill-omened a thing it would be, if of that day, for instance, on which his people were preparing to celebrate the prolongation of his life and reign, every moment might be told of the death of some of those gallant men, who might have lived to defend his empire, and to promote the honour of his crown.

Sir, we have heard much of that relentless disregard to human life, which the Emperor Napoleon has displayed, in prosecuting the schemes of his ambition. But, at least, he has something to put into the opposite scale. In return for their sufferings, he is enabled to tell the people of France of battles won, of provinces conquered, and of empires founded. As to us, our population is wasted upon enterprises which fail from their own intrinsic absurdity. All our sacrifices are repaid—by disgrace. A useless dear-bought victory is the utmost advantage we ever obtain; but our troops are, for the greater part, destroyed in a way, compared with which the fate of those who fall by the sword, may be considered as fortunate, and the death of a British soldier is embittered by the reflection, that it can contribute neither to the advantage nor to the honour of his country; that it is at once useless and inglorious. Sir, the Expedition to the coast of Italy, which, at any other time, would have excited so much indignation and surprise, is hardly worth mentioning now, that the public mind is occupied by far greater evils. Such, indeed, have been the transactions of the last year that the account of a mere failure will form one of the least melancholy chapters of its history. It is the light of that picture of which Spain and Holland are the shades; and we must be content to consider that enterprise as a matter of congratulation which was unattended, at least, by any great calamity, which has not filled our houses with mourning, nor wrung our hearts with affliction, which has only wasted the strength and lowered the name of England, and which has done this great country no other harm than that of making its counsils the laughing stock of all Europe.

Sir, it is impossible to consider these things without feeling some compassion for the people of England, doomed to suffer under such great complicated evils; and yet I must fairly own, that this sentiment is very much weakened in my mind, when I recollect how much their own per-

verseness has contributed towards their ruin. I cannot forget, that the authors of these calamities, are the men after their own heart, whom they rejoiced to see call to play their last stake, whose return to power, and the revival of whose foreign policy they hailed as the certain omens of glory and success. They were tired of a languid war, they were disgusted with a system of economy which would have enabled them to continue the contest, till the time should arrive when it might be terminated with honour and security. The yoke was not galling enough; their burthens did not increase sufficiently fast. They were anxious for new men and for new measures. They wished for an active stirring administration; a government that would do something, that would not let the force of the country lie unemployed, that would fill the gazettes and create titles; people who, if they could find no objects, would make some; who, if there were no points of attack, would waste whole armies and navies upon those that were unattackable; who would send all over Europe canvassing treacherous or unwilling allies to receive our men and money; and who would exhaust our best means of defending ourselves at home, in fostering an imaginary spirit of resistance abroad. Their desire has been fulfilled; their favourite system has been followed; and its effects are now visible. We have sown in folly, and we have reaped in misfortune; we have seen all the faults and misfortunes of a seventeen years war, copied and repeated in the course of as many months. The disgrace at the Helder, the carnage at Quiberon, the waste by the pestilence in St. Domingo, the ridiculous inefficiency of the Expedition to Ferrol; all these things happening at considerable intervals, were but the types of what the last year has exhibited in Spain, Italy and Holland, with circumstances of more palpable mismanagement, and of aggravated distress.

Sir, I would put it to the conscience of any gentleman whether he thinks that such a government as this is worthy of confidence. If he does, let him vote for the original address; but if he does not, he must, I think, support the amendment of the noble Lord. Let him consider its history and its composition; let him recollect how it arose out of the dissensions of the last, how it was born, as it were, in disgrace, and a cripple from its infancy; let him consider how the great offices of state are filled, and, above all, let him

compare the government with the state of the country. There have been times, indeed, before the new order of things began, and before that system which had prevailed in Europe for so many centuries, yielded to the enormous influence of one state, times of security and repose, when even these, or any other persons of moderate understanding and attainments, might have governed the country, though not with credit, at least, without much danger. But now that the whole power of Europe is concentrated in France, and the whole power of France concentrated in one man, and that man the greatest general and statesman the world ever produced, and the bitterest enemy England ever knew; it is an absolute infatuation not to have recourse to our best means of defence—moral as well as physical, to the wisdom and union of our councils as well as to the strength of our fleets and armies. Sir, I do not appear here as the blind admirer, as the indiscriminate partizan of the gentlemen on the bench below me, and their political adherents. I am bound to them by no ties of hope, or personal interest. It is not for their own sakes, but for the sake of the country that I wish to see them return to office. Indeed I know not whether in the present situation of things, office, which under more favourable circumstances, is no doubt, a natural object of ambition, is to be wished for, as a benefit, to any set of men. This, at least, is not a bed of roses. They might escape blame, but they could not possibly acquire any reputation. They would succeed to shattered finances, to unsuccessful arms, to disgraced councils, and to a war, the close or the continuation of which it is alike impossible to contemplate without alarm; they would succeed to difficulties that might confound the wisest, and to dangers that might appal the boldest statesman; difficulties and dangers for which the emoluments of office, and the pride of party victory, would but poorly compensate to men who looked, as I hope they look, not only to themselves but to the country; to future fame as well as to present power.

Perhaps it may be already too late, and we may shortly be destined, partly owing to our own follies, and partly owing to those awful events which we could not controul, and which have made our times the beginning of a new æra in the world, to share the fate of the other nations of Europe. Perhaps we are already in a situation which defies the efforts of the

wisest and best men among us, and which would have defied the efforts of these wiser and greater men whom we have lost. But if the country, shorn of its honours, and humbled as it must be, can still be preserved, sure I am, that its preservation cannot be the work of those by whom it has been brought into its present situation, or of persons who proceed upon the same system with inferior ability. It cannot be preserved by the wreck and remnant of a ministry, by something weaker than that which was already supposed to have attained the utmost possible point of debility; persons whose defects are notorious, and whose very apology is shameful; who offer us their intolerance and court favour, as substitutes for all the qualities that ought to belong to an English administration. If we are not willing to bear every thing, this is not to be borne. It is time to try some other remedy before the last agony comes on. If this empire is to be destroyed let it not be under the reign of these Augustuli. Let its end be worthy of a state which has achieved great actions and produced great men. If we fall let us fall with dignity.

Mr. *Herbert* objected to the Amendment, as it condemned the conduct of ministers without evidence.

Sir *Thomas Turton* said, that he could not sit down and give a silent vote upon subjects which had excited so much regret and indignation among all classes of the community. As the representatives of the people, they ought to tell their constituents that they did not overlook the conduct of ministers, and that they would not pass by their misconduct without punishment. He was really astonished at the conduct of the noble lord who moved the Address, as well as that of the gentleman who seconded it, in having expressed a hope that it would be carried with unanimity, when it was a mere echo of the speech, composed by his Majesty's ministers. At present they wanted information to enable the House to judge whether public affairs had been well or ill managed, and without delay they ought to pledge themselves to the country to call for such information, and demand a rigid enquiry after the supposed delinquents. If the House considered the armaments that were still going forward, it ought not to lose an instant in the investigation of those which had already terminated in disaster and disgrace. He would appeal to any gentleman opposite him, whether

it was not the sense of the people in all quarters that our arms had lately been disgraced, and that they were unanimous for the discovery and punishment of the author? He was astonished to hear of a fresh army having been sent to Spain, after the disasters which had befallen the former, which had a much fairer prospect of success. But the most infallible mode of securing miscarriage had been resorted to by ministers, when they divided their strength between Spain and Walcheren. The circumstances of the transactions had been so extraordinary, both in the plan and in the execution, that in justice to themselves, ministers ought to demand the most rigid enquiry into their own conduct. Thinking as he did that such an enquiry was necessary he should vote for the Amendment.

Lord *Kensington* did not mean either to support the Address or the Amendment, but he wished the House to adopt some course which would produce unanimity. Not being in possession of the necessary documents, he could not know to whom the country ought to impute the dishonour and calamities which had lately attached to his Majesty's arms. He sincerely lamented the unfortunate expedition to the Scheldt, and thought it absolutely necessary that that disgraceful enterprize should be accounted for by his majesty's ministers, by the noble lord whose department it then was to superintend it, or by the naval and military commanders who conducted the execution of it. Our situation in this country was certainly a subject of consolation to the people, when they compared their state with that of others; but when he saw the present abject state of our allies, whose territories had been nearly swallowed up in the French empire, he did not see that even we had much reason for exultation. He wished the House to present a dutiful Address to the throne, desiring an enquiry into the conduct of ministers, but carefully avoiding all expressions which might appear to prejudice one or all of them. He was sorry to perceive one very essential subject had been omitted in the Speech, but which he would wish to introduce into the Address; he meant the situation of the people of Ireland, who were our most faithful as well as most useful allies. He had opportunities of being informed, and knew it to be true, that they were now suffering under very great hardships, but which he did not impute to the noble

duke who then represented our most gracious Sovereign in that country. Ministers ought to extend much more attention to Ireland, than they had hitherto done, to preserve it sure to our empire, and unassailable by the enemy. Portugal he also thought might be defended with 30,000 men against any invading army, at least such was the opinion of the late sir Charles Stewart, whose opinions were much respected by the officers, and he trusted ministers would take the proper measures for its defence.

Mr. *Brand* saw no good likely to arise to the country from an enquiry, as he was well aware of the manner in which it would most likely be carried on. He therefore liked that part of the Amendment, which at once condemned the expeditions to Walcheren and Spain, better than that which merely proposed an enquiry into them. The measures of ministers, even as mentioned by themselves, deserved censure and condemnation. The tardiness with which they executed what measures they had devised, where promptitude was particularly necessary, excited the surprise and indignation of every man. For argument's sake he would suppose their projects to be the best concerted; still would the tardiness of their execution be sufficient to establish the criminality of ministers. Buonaparté left Spain before the end of January: it was then plain that a war with Austria would inevitably ensue; he left Paris on the 16th of April: fought the battle of Ratisbon on the 22d, and in a few days after reached Vienna. If ministers were determined to assist Austria they ought to have done it in time, and not after her army was defeated, and an armistice conceded to the conqueror. (Hear, hear!) Buonaparté was able to draw his forces from Spain and bring the war with Austria to a termination before our expedition could reach Walcheren. Could not the same armament have been sent to Walcheren before these events happened? but ministers acted similarly towards Spain. The marquis of Wellesley had been appointed ambassador from this country to the Supreme Junta on the 29th of May last, but he did not depart from England until the end of July. Were the affairs of any country likely to be attended with success, when planned and executed by such ministers? He insisted upon it that it was a want of policy to send troops to Spain, where they must

conform to new habits of living, and where there was not the least hope of ultimate success. Whenever we succeeded by land against the French, they were in an isolated situation, where their chief had no means of reinforcing them, but into Spain he could at his pleasure pour his legions, and compel us to retreat.

Mr. *Lushington* had no objection to an enquiry, but he presumed that the documents which his majesty had ordered to be laid before the House would prove satisfactory; as all classes of people had been once zealous for the success of Spain against her invaders, and encouraged ministers to assist her to such an extent; he did not like to see them abandoned, or public confidence withdrawn from them.

Mr. *Bathurst* said that no one felt the necessity of supporting his majesty or the government more than he did. The question now only was, what sort of inquiry they were to hold out to the public. Feeling as he did, in common with many others, that there were several subjects of disgrace and calamity which had lately occurred and which called much for parliamentary inquiry, he came down with the hope that ministers would have put into the Speech not only a declaration of their readiness to afford every information that could be required, but that the mover and seconder of the Address would have introduced into the Address a pledge on the part of parliament to take these calamities and disasters into immediate consideration. He had hoped that ministers would not have put expressions into his majesty's mouth so coldly alluding to those disasters; but, that being the case, he surely thought that with such a strong *prima facie* ground of misconduct, parliament not only should inquire, but should pledge itself to do so. The Amendment, however, he thought went too far and rather precluded inquiry, by prejudging the case that was to be inquired into. The term indignation ought not to precede, but to follow conviction. To that expression therefore he could not agree; neither could he allow that the crisis had been "marked only by a repetition of former error." The battle of Talavera had, to his mind, placed the valour of our troops on a height on which it never formerly stood. The latter part of the Amendment, he thought went rather farther in the way of prejudgment than was necessary. It seemed to go beyond what, to his conception, was necessary, and to

infer something criminal. He also thought that a necessary part of the Address was omitted, and that after thanking his majesty for his communication of the necessary documents, it would be sufficient, as a pledge to the country, to state that they should immediately proceed to institute a parliamentary inquiry into the failures of the late campaign.

Mr. *Ponsonby* said that the hon. member who spoke last had much misunderstood the Amendment of his noble friend. It was not the intention of his noble friend by that Amendment to criminate in the first instance, any particular person in any particular transaction. Its only object was to tell his majesty that that House felt deeply for the calamities of the last campaign, and that they were resolved to institute such inquiries as should lead to a discovery of the causes which had led to the calamity and disgrace which had thus been brought on the country. Did the hon. member now deny that the country had been exposed to calamity and disgrace? Did he believe that this country had ever, at any former period, been exposed to so great calamity and disgrace? Could the hon. gentleman deny that ministers had exposed our councils to scorn and derision? Could he deny that they had afforded an opportunity to our enemy to scoff at our folly, and in his publications to scorn and deride us? And still farther, could he deny that Europe did not sympathize in this feeling, and agree that the observations were just? Did the hon. gent. then think, that all these instances of national disgrace were to be endured by the country, and notwithstanding that the ministers must be held to be men of the most perfect wisdom and propriety of conduct? If so, was he also prepared to say that the officers employed in the service were not to blame? That all had failed, but that neither they who planned, nor they who executed had done wrong? To determine this, it would be well to consider what was the state of the country and of Europe at the end of the last campaign. That general who had been much and most unjustly traduced (sir John Moore), fell in the month of January in the battle of Corunna, which at the moment of victory he sealed with his blood. A battle, notwithstanding all that the hon. gent. had said, at least as brilliant and glorious as the battle of Talavera. A battle fought when the commander was carrying a retreating army out of the country; not one

where the rashness and presumption of the general induced him to risk an engagement, which there was no call on him to hazard, where not even one good consequence was to be effected by the result. Buonaparté then quitted Spain, and it was known to ministers that Austria was to attempt once more to stem the torrent of his ambition. It was for them then, therefore, to consider where they could make the most effectual stand, and well to weigh how they could best apply the force committed to their charge. He had left Spain, and that must have shewn the ministers of this country that he considered Austria as the most formidable enemy, for it was his rule never to trust his generals, however experienced, with the most important service, but to undertake that himself. This, therefore, was plain, when he quitted Spain and returned to his capital. They had not only general means of information, but they must have had what amounted almost to perfect knowledge on the subject—and thus were they enabled to chuse the best point for diversion which presented itself, either in favour of Spain or of Austria, though the conduct of Buonaparté himself must have convinced them, that the cause and support of Austria was infinitely the more important. No step, however, was taken on this important point till the month of April, by which time Austria had begun the war; and on the 20th of that month the battle of Ebersdorff was fought. In that same month one of the cabinet ministers desired the removal of the minister, whose peculiar province it was to prepare and arrange any expedition to be fitted out by this country, because he deemed him not equal to the duty which he had to perform. Instead of that concert among themselves, which, it must be apparent to every one, was so indispensable at so critical a period—a cabinet minister was requiring the dismissal of the very minister whose peculiar duty it was to direct the preparation of the expedition. From the battle of Ebersdorff to that of Esling, Buonaparté had gone on gaining victory after victory. Then, indeed, he received a check, and might be truly said to have experienced a defeat; but the battle of Esling, in which he was so unsuccessful, led to a suspension of hostilities. It now became a question, how and in what quarter was the force of Great Britain employed all this time? Lord Wellington was in Portugal with about 38,000 men. Afterwards an expe-

dition was sent to the Scheldt under the earl of Chatham, consisting of 40,000; and sir John Stuart had gone to Calabria with 15,000. These several bodies amounted to about 95,000, and there might have been sent from this country 5 or 6,000 more, making a total of 100,000 men. Austria, in the battle of Esling, in which she beat Buonaparté, had, according to her own account 75,000, and according even to the French account 90,000 men. If, instead of dividing the British force, as was the never-ceasing practice of weak minds, this force had been concentrated into one, and employed in support of Austria, we should there have had a greater, and he need hardly add a better army, (for no troops were to be compared with our own,) than the army by which the French had been defeated at the battle of Esling. But how was this great British force employed? He did not say that it would have been right to employ them in continental operations; but ministers had determined that this was a wise measure, for they actually were employed in such a service. If they had been confined to any one object, they might have effected some great operation; but divided as they were, and formed into separate and distant corps, they could be, and in fact had proved, good for no one purpose. Did or could the hon. member say, that these circumstances inferred nothing criminal against the ministers or against the commanders? The Amendment said nothing more. It charged general disgrace and calamity, not attaching any particular instance of either to any particular party.—There was a very material difference between an Amendment calling for inquiry, upon the broad ground of acknowledged public disasters, and any proceeding prejudging the result of that inquiry. They were two very different propositions, though certainly the arguments of the hon. gent. (Mr. Bathurst) had a tendency to confound them. But did that hon. gent. mean to say, that any motion that went to pledge that house to inquiry, pledged them not only to inflict punishment upon the guilty, but even to presume those to be guilty who had not yet been put upon their trial? He asked him fairly, if he thought that Amendment to which he had objected, pledged the House to pass sentence upon ministers previous to inquiry? Did the hon. gent. mean to say, that the Amendment under consid-

ration, was calculated to impede inquiry? or did not that hon. gent. believe that it was intended solely to promote it? Did that hon. gent. mean to say, that from the shape of that Amendment it might be reasonably conjectured that it was the design of the framers of it to entrap the House into some premature pledge against further inquiry? It was impossible that the hon. gent. could seriously think so. The object of that Amendment was, to pledge the House, and solemnly to pledge it, to institute the most rigorous inquiry into the causes of the disasters of the country, and to follow up the result of that inquiry with the most rigorous proceedings against the authors of our national disgraces. This was the object of the Amendment; and if it was, it would be vain to ask upon what shadow of pretence men could be found, in the present perilous state of things, to oppose it. And first, with respect to the campaign in Spain and Portugal. Indeed, in detailing the disasters of this most calamitous campaign, it was impossible to avoid recounting again and again the same charges; for the errors of the last campaign were but a repetition of the errors of the first. His majesty's ministers industriously retraced the beaten track of their former blunders; every subsequent attempt stood in the very footsteps of the failure that preceded it; the later errors were only the more recent repetitions of errors recently committed. Every one knew this, at least out of doors was convinced of it; there might be found gentlemen in that House, however, who would affirm otherwise, but there could not be found outside its walls one single man who thought otherwise.—Sir John Moore was sent into Spain at the head of an army to co-operate with armies that were no where to be found to co-operate with him. At a subsequent period, however, when the Spanish armies were in considerably less force, and all hope of effectual resistance to the progress of the French arms less sanguine, ministers were found repeating their former error in an aggravated degree, by sending out an army not larger than the former, to contend against tenfold more arduous obstacles than those by which the valour of that former army had been rendered wholly unavailing. The disasters attending the blunders of his majesty's ministers could not redeem them from a daring and hasty repetition of those blunders; they would not be taught by the calamity that

was the fruit of their own errors; they were unable to derive from all that mischief of which they had been the authors, the little comparative good that other men could learn from misfortune; and what could be expected to teach those men wisdom who proved themselves incapable of being enlightened by experience?—It was wearisome to enter upon a painful and disgusting detail that promised to be almost endless. But he would, before he sat down, advert in one or two words to the more flagrant disgraces, that within the last six months had crowned the good works of the present administration. In the first place, then, with respect to the great failure of the Expedition to Walcheren. He would ask the hon. gent. who spoke last, if he had any doubt in his own mind, that with respect to that Expedition there had not been gross misconduct somewhere? Did the hon. gent. mean to say, that there was not? Or if he could not seriously entertain so monstrous an opinion, and if he did think that there had been misconduct in some quarter, could he say that it ought not to be inquired into, and traced to its true source? They had been told in the Speech, that it had been the object of that Expedition to make a diversion in favour of Austria. But would any man in that House believe, that, if we had sent a much greater force than even the large one employed in that Expedition, it would have had the smallest influence upon the emperor of France? Did any man in or out of that House believe, that it would have tempted Buonaparté to direct any portion of his army from the accomplishment of the great object then before him. That it would have induced him to have recalled a single regiment from beyond the Pyrenees? If there was an individual who thought it would, he had not acquired that opinion of Buonaparté's military genius which seventeen years of war might have taught him; so that, had the Expedition even succeeded, he was not aware of what material advantage could be expected from it operating as a diversion. And did all this furnish no ground for the allegations contained in the Amendment? But still it was contended, that they should first inquire, that all definitive judgment should be suspended, till the result of deliberate inquiry was fairly before them; what was intended by all this? was it meant that they were to begin by taking these things as problematical, which were



universally known, established and acknowledged? Was it meant that they were gravely to proceed, to inquire whether the climate of Walcheren was, or was not unhealthy? Whether the season at which the British army made its descent upon that island was, or was not unfavourable? Was it meant that they ought now to stop, to inquire whether ministers were, or were not wholly ignorant of the climate and circumstances of an island within twenty hours sail of England? And was that House to pause scrupulously balancing the comparative extent of that ignorance; whether they did not know what they should have fully known, or whether they were not as ignorant of the nature of the place as of the interior parts of Africa, or those of China. Was that what was meant? And were they thus to amuse one another, and insult an injured country by calling for inquiry into the truth of facts, as notorious as they are scandalous? Were they to inquire who was selected to take the command of the greatest Expedition that ever left the shores of England? Was that another of the notorieties of which it is so necessary to ascertain the truth? But who was this commander? A general wise from long experience, and illustrious from the splendour of many victories? Covered with well-earned laurels, the military pride of his country; exciting her most sanguine hopes, and commanding her most implicit confidence? Was this the man appointed to lead her armies into battle? No; but the flower of her forces was committed in an evil hour to the guidance of that inauspicious and ill-omened officer, of whom we know nothing more, than that he was once at the head of the Admiralty. And such was his lazy discharge of the duties of that department, that though his near relative was the minister, he had not the courage to suffer the functions of the state to sleep beneath the indolence of even his own brother. Was there a man in England who did not know this? But, no matter, we must inquire nevertheless.—One of the avowed objects of this ill-fated expedition was to make a diversion in favour of Austria. Was there a man in that House who did not know that the armistice between France and Austria had taken place before even the first part of our expedition sailed; ministers were themselves aware of it; they hesitated it is said, perhaps so; but still the expedition was permitted to sail. All serious

hopes of any effectual diversion must, at least, at that period, have been given up. But how had this or any other object been followed up? Flushing fell the 15th of August; on the 16th of September lord Chatham returned, and on the 18th, two days after, his lordship issued a proclamation; for what purpose? requiring all officers forthwith to join their respective regiments in the island he himself had quitted, and to resume their military duties in that grave of British valour, that burial ground of British soldiers. How long afterwards was the island retained? and what was our army doing all the time that it was retained? what were the glorious services in which they were engaged? in a listless resistance to the inglorious destruction of contagion, pestilence and disease! Is this, said Mr. Ponsonby, is this the way you have chosen to reward the brave men who upheld the name of England in the battle of Corunna? Is this the reward for all their gallant services? Is this the temptation you would hold out to others, to fight as gloriously in Spain, that they might perish as ignominiously in Walcheren? Why sacrifice the best and bravest of our armies, rather than acknowledge you have made a conquest that was not worth the keeping? (Hear, hear!) Is it then too much to say, that we will inquire? whatever gentlemen may think, I hesitate not to affirm, that there is not a man out of this House who does not think we ought to go at least as far as you are now called upon to go. The country is labouring under the irritating sense of abuses, gross and long continued: it looks to the constitutional organ for redress and justice, and it expects that, in a crisis of such awful moment, the House of Commons will not be wanting in its duty. We all know, that suspicions, however unworthy, have gone abroad, and we know too, that there are men who are but too vigilant in seizing every opportunity to strengthen and to propagate a general distrust of the purity of parliament. Let the House then, weigh well the mischievous consequences of being at such a time at variance with the unanimous opinion of the country.—The same fatuity that marked the conduct of ministers with respect to Walcheren, was equally observable in their conduct of the operations of the campaign in Spain. Lord Wellesley, in the month of April, was gazetted as ambassador. Indeed, it was remarkable that it was this month

that had been chosen by ministers for planning all their various operations in favour of our allies, and as well against the enemy as against one another. Lord Wellesley, notwithstanding his appointment in April, and all that was expected from his vigorous exertions in Spain, did not sail till the 24th of July following. What occasioned this delay he left it to ministers to explain.—With respect to the operations of lord Wellington, he knew not whether they originated with that noble lord himself or from the cabinet; but it did appear that on the 15th of July, he being then at Placenzia, was unable to follow the enemy for want of means of transport or conveyance; and on the 8th of August following, in his dispatches from Deleytosa, he complains of want of provisions. Whatever was the cause of the then position of the army under lord Wellington, it yet, he thought, called for inquiry. Why had he not means of transporting his troops from Placenzia? Why without provisions at Deleytosa? And why was the noble lord, the ambassador, who was in England at the time of the battle of Talavera, detained so long from rendering those services to the Spanish cause which it was fondly expected would have resulted from his exertions? These facts, taken from their own gazette, called upon the House to say, that culpability there was somewhere; let severe inquiry discover where. They were not now called upon to inquire whether there had been errors, and disasters, and disgraces, but to whom they were to be traced, and whose punishment ought to atone (as far as it could do) for their calamitous consequences.—After enforcing with great strength of argument and much emphatical reasoning, the absolute necessity of an immediate, rigorous, and complete inquiry, the right hon. gentl concluded with the following observations: The situation of the country is extremely awful; and if they, whose ignorance and obstinacy have placed it in that situation, are now to be exempted from the responsibility of having done so, its danger will not, on that account, be less alarming.—After a repetition of the same errors have produced a repetition of the same disasters, this House cannot content itself with doing merely that which it has thought sufficient in periods less critical, and in exigencies less pressing. This is no time for half measures. I do think that it is a crisis that calls upon the House of

Commons to put forth its penal powers; it is no time for civility; it is no time for ceremoniously waving the best interests of the State in courteous compliance to the feelings of those who have either betrayed or endangered them; the present is not a time for shaping Amendments to the imaginary niceties of those gentlemen who revolt at all idea of punishment—it is the time to speak out and pursue with unwearied zeal public defaulters of every description. Had I a choice between punishment and pardon, I would prefer the former, because I think the circumstances of the country imperiously demand some solemn examples. It fell to my lot, last sessions, to call the attention of the House to what I thought I plainly proved to have amounted to gross misconduct on the part of ministers in the Spanish campaign. The House thought otherwise, but what have they done since? Have they since exhibited in the Peninsula any monument of recovered vigour and awakened wisdom; and if they have not, what will the House do now? I then invoked them by the manes of the heroes who fell in the battle of Corunna—by their as heroic survivors—to do justice to the valour that so unavailingly bled, and so fruitlessly triumphed. The House have in their remembrance what their decision was then, and should not forget what has been the conduct of the same ministers since. Once more then I ask, what will the House do now? If they will act again in the same way—if they can again be guilty of such indifference to the zeal and sufferings of such brave and gallant men—I will not venture to predict what may be the consequence; but I will say, that if this House can come to such a decision, they are unworthy to be called the countrymen of the heroes to whose services they will then have awarded so iniquitous a recompence. It may be said, that the present ministers are not answerable for the errors of the late administration, but I doubt if such a plea, as trifling as it is false, will this night be resorted to. Or the eleven ministers in the former cabinet, seven are in the present, and, of course, the same majority in both. The Lord Privy Seal, the President of the Council, the First Finance Minister, &c. &c. are still in the cabinet. But upon a plea so trifling he should no longer dwell, and would conclude with entreating the House, keeping once for all the campaign of 1809 in their eye, to vindicate their own character, and do an insulted country justice.

Mr. *Bathurst* observed in explanation, that from their number it was impossible for him to answer all the questions put to him by the right hon. gent. He would only say that the substance of what he had meant to state was, that in a motion for enquiry, it was unfair to anticipate the result, which the Amendment in the present instance certainly did, and for that reason and on that ground only he had opposed it.

Lord *Castlereagh* felt it to be his duty to justify the line of conduct that had been pursued, respecting the expeditions, upon which so much of that day's discussion turned, and he assured the right hon. gent. who spoke last, that there was no part of his conduct which he should not have an opportunity of knowing. Conscious of the wise policy upon which these expeditions were framed, and confident that he could most fully and satisfactorily justify the principles upon which they had been undertaken, and the manner in which they had been directed, to the attainment of their objects, he had more reason to court than to shrink from inquiry. But as the share he had had in these transactions, had been frequently adverted to, in the course of the debate, he could not bring himself to allow the present question to come to a vote, without offering some observations to the House upon the subjects and arguments that had been introduced into the discussion. He did not think it necessary, however, to enter very minutely into the subject on the present occasion, as it would come frequently under the consideration of the House in a more detailed form, when the necessary documents were before them. He trusted, that he never, in any part of his political conduct, discovered any disposition to evade enquiry; and though differing as he did, from the right hon. gent. who had now sat down, on many other points, he had always agreed with him in that. On the former occasion, to which the right hon. member had alluded, he had not opposed the motion for enquiry; but the majority of the House thought differently from him, and negatived the motion for inquiry. The same inclination he had always discovered for enquiry, he felt in an equal degree on the present occasion. He was sensible, however, at the same time, of the difficulties to military, as well as public men, in attending such enquiries, and the almost utter impracticability, in some cases, of making their views fully

understood, when not seconded by favourable results; but the constitution required that the House should be satisfied; and regarding, so highly as he did, the privileges of that House, he would be the last man to attempt to deprive them of so salutary and constitutional a check on public men, and public measures. He, for his own part, would not shrink from enquiry, and did not fear the exercise of that penal justice with which the right hon. gent. had threatened him. He claimed no mercy from him, but most sincerely requested that the House would examine into the merits or demerits of his conduct, and do him justice. The summary mode which the right hon. gent. had taken, in passing judgment before he had the information and evidence, was ill suited to the ends of justice, and the dignity of that House. He did not, however, complain of the right hon. gent.'s severity in this respect, but trusted that the House would not, like him, think it necessary to recur to the whole course of the administration in which he had lately a share, to furnish the grounds of charge, or subjects of this enquiry. The House, he trusted, would confine itself to the late campaign, and discard all such subjects as had already come under their review. Such an enquiry as the right hon. gent. had opened would be an enquiry only of jealousy; but they would not attempt, he trusted, to bestow censure, or attach disgrace beyond the transactions of last year. It was not his intention to make any invidious comparisons, but in the military and naval strength of the country much improvement, it would be allowed, had lately taken place. The Baltic was at this moment in our possession. The Brest fleet had been nearly annihilated, and the fleet of the Tagus had been brought into our ports; and he would ask if Spain would have discovered that spirit of resistance and enthusiasm against the common enemy, had she not been conscious of acting in conjunction with this country? Amid the great political misfortunes, which presented themselves around us, was not this country in a state not only of safety, but of unexampled prosperity? With all our power and prosperity, however, this was not, comparatively speaking, a military country. We could not go to the continent as we did to sea. Our military efforts being directed towards the continent, must depend in a great measure on the results of the efforts and engagements of

other powers, to whom we could only be auxiliary; but whatever might be the result of the campaign in Spain, or whatever might have been the issue of the struggle maintained by Austria, the military glory of this country, it must be admitted, had been much promoted. The principles on which the campaign in Spain, as the right hon. gent. called it, but which should more properly be called the campaign of Portugal, had been conducted, were far different from those on which the antecedent Spanish campaign had been undertaken. The operations of the late campaign were particularly connected with the security of Portugal. Lord Wellington had certainly intrusted to him a discretionary power, and that power he contended his lordship had most judiciously exercised. Had he not advanced to Talavera he must have inevitably disgraced himself and the British arms. Lord Wellington, it had been said, had 38,000 men, but the truth was that he had not more than 24,000. In fact in the battle at Talavera lord Wellington had but 20,000 British troops. He regretted that the military character of the country should be thus sacrificed to party politics, and pointed out the pernicious tendency of such mistaken statements. He contended that never had a greater victory been achieved than that at Talavera, though the army was afterwards obliged to retire before a greatly superior force.—The delay in fitting out the expedition to Walcheren had been complained of, but the means were wanting to move it sooner, the transports not having arrived from Portugal till the 5th of July. It was said the expedition had not been directed to the most favourable object; but great as the resources of this country were, there was a limit abroad beyond which we could not go. It was impossible to send it to the North of Spain without having the means of maintaining it there. Gentlemen had asked, why the army of sir John Moore was not employed immediately on its return on that service? It had been said, too, that the different regiments were ready, and could have been embarked immediately; but by the time the regiments had been recruited and were reported fit for service, the Expedition to Portugal had reached its destination, as it was not till the 10th of June that they were reported to be fit for service. The delay complained of in transporting the cavalry it was impossible

to avoid, as, though the transports were ordered from Portugal in May, they did not arrive till the 12th of July, after the infantry were embarked. Here a new position was assumed, that the force thus collected could be employed in continental operations, or in a *coup de main*. But there was a limit beyond which our means could not be strained. It was impossible to transport them to the North of Germany, and had it been possible, still would it have been, in a military point of view, improper, from the situation and disposition of the neighbouring powers. Had government even had the means of sending the Expedition to the North of Europe, with the immense expence attending such a measure, it would not have been prudent, he contended, to have united a military force of 40,000 men in that quarter, with Prussia, and the whole weight of France against us, while Russia, at the same time, was our enemy. The Scheldt appeared the most eligible point of attack, as more nearly connected with the commercial views of this country, and in the event of success there, wounding the enemy in that part where he was likely to feel most sore. Antwerp was an object of great political importance to France, and a descent on it was more likely to call forth Buonaparté's attention than an attack on another place. It is his practice to slight any distant diversions that may be made, and stedfastly pursue his main object; but when he should be thus attacked in a vital point, it was reasonable to expect that it would operate powerfully in favour of our allies. He was ready to state why he thought success probable, and likely to be attended with little risk. He was not ignorant of the nature of the climate at that season of the year, but it was not intended that the army should be locked up there for such a length of time. It was a *coup de main* against the naval power of the enemy that was intended, and not the capture of Walcheren alone; it was therefore expected that the army would be employed in a dry country between Walcheren and Bergen-op-Zoom.—The melancholy accounts that had been circulated of the state of the troops were greatly exaggerated, and though our loss appeared great to us, yet compared with the losses of France in all her wars, it was but trifling. No object of magnitude was expected to oppose our retaining Walcheren. It had never been considered as an axiom, that the risk attending the keeping pos-

session of that Island, should deter us from taking it. We held it 31 years during the Barrier Treaty, and had since had it in our possession. He was not furnished with materials at present to speak on the whole of the question. He, however, if the officers employed should appear to have done their duty, would ever be ready to hold them above that vulgar calumny by which they would probably be assailed. With respect to the evaluation of the island, he had had no share in the measures of government. Before the return of the Commander in Chief, he found himself to have been in a situation that he had been unconscious of, (hear! hear!) and having retired from office, had had no intercourse with the officers employed, except such as was absolutely necessary, and could not take upon himself, therefore, either to justify or condemn what had followed. He could not, for the same reason, say any thing respecting the failure with regard to Antwerp. The subject divided itself into two parts; so far as he was concerned, and that part for what he was not responsible; but not being in possession of the necessary materials to enable him to judge of the whole, he must, for the present, suspend his judgment, pledging himself, at the same time, that he was anxious to have his conduct subjected to the most rigid scrutiny.

Mr. Ponsonby, in explanation, said, he did not mean to state, that lord Wellington had 38,000 men at the battle of Talavera, but that 38,000 men were employed in the peninsula.

General Tarleton differed entirely from the opinion pronounced by a noble lord (Kensington) that Portugal could be defended. The authority of sir Charles Stewart did not bear upon the point, as he only gave his opinion of Portugal as it was in the year 1797. He thought a most peculiar degree of responsibility lay upon lord Chatham, who was at the same time a minister, and the commander in chief of the Expedition. The Expedition which he commanded was attended with greater expence of treasure, and a greater sacrifice of human life, than almost any other in our history, and it had most completely failed in its objects. The Expedition to Spain was equally a subject which deserved inquiry. He first heard of Soult's army being completely defeated and dispersed, with the loss of all its artillery; and yet this same army, so beaten as was described, appeared afterwards in the field, and

made lord Wellington retreat from Talavera. The march to Talavera was most imprudent. When the gallant sir John Moore was entering Spain, he was informed that a body of 10,000 men would completely exhaust that part of the country of its provisions.—He then at considerable length stated the superior advantages which he conceived would have resulted from employing 30,000 British troops in a diversion in Italy, under the command of sir John Stuart. This might not have been agreeable to the Wellesleys, but might have effected a much more important diversion, by preventing the army of Eugene Napoleon from joining Buonaparte, which would have been, in his opinion, the most important service that it was in our power to have rendered to Austria.

Mr. Canning said, that he perceived the House wished to come to a decision on the question, and it would not be necessary for him to detain them long in explaining the reasons for the vote he should give this night against the Amendment, and in favour of the original Address. When the right hon. gent. (Mr. Ponsonby) however spoke of the great responsibility which attached to his majesty's ministers for the measures which they advised, in which responsibility he must participate, as far as he was concerned, it appeared to him that the right hon. gent. should have gone a little farther, and, on the part of himself and the other gentlemen in opposition to the present administration, have stated, that they also laid claim to, and courted the full responsibility which was due to their measures while they were in the administration. The right hon. gent. might there find ample occasion for that penal justice, of which he spoke.—He was as anxious as any man for the fullest inquiry on every point, where an open inquiry could not be prejudicial to the interests of the country. But he could not agree to the Amendment, because he considered it would go to pledge the House to an inquiry, and he wished to suspend this opinion whether a further inquiry was necessary or not, until the documents were laid on the table, which his majesty's Speech promised to lay before Parliament.—The precise period when his own knowledge and responsibility on this subject ceased, was when it had been intimated to government, that the objects of the Expedition had not been, and could not be accomplished. He did not know but that sufficient reasons might be produced to ac-

count for this failure ; but at the same time he could not agree with some of those gentlemen who had spoken and who seemed to consider, that the calamitous failure of the main objects of the Expedition was in some degree alleviated by the partial success it had met with. This was a doctrine to which he could never agree.—He never would have consented to the Expedition, if he had supposed that nothing greater would have been accomplished. He never supposed that the possession of Flushing, or Walcheren, were objects adequate to such great preparation and such expence ; but he did consider that the possession of the naval arsenal at Antwerp would have been an object of the first importance as a British object, and that no other point could have been selected in which the force which it was in the power of the country to send, could render more service to the common cause. If the Expedition had succeeded in this object, it would have set free such a considerable portion of our naval force, that it would have made our resources for the future more easily applicable to any other assistance which could be given to the continent. If it were true, as some gentlemen stated, that Buonaparté was never to be diverted from the grand objects of his policy, by any Expedition which this country could send out, such an objection would not go particularly to the Expedition to the isle of Walcheren, but to any Expedition which ministers could send out. From that principle, it must be obvious that it would have been equally useless to have sent the Expedition to the north of Germany or to Spain, and in that case it would appear, that the best diversion it was possible to make, was (as a great man once observed), to keep your armies at home, that the enemy may be in constant apprehension, from not knowing where the danger was likely to approach. The only doctrine which could grow out of such a principle would be, that no expedition should be sent out, and that the disposable force of the country should never be made use of. If it were, however, true that no expeditions of ours could in any manner divert Buonaparté from his other projects, it would at least be allowed, that it would be a subject of consideration, whether we could not give some material annoyance to an enemy. If the Expedition had fully succeeded, it would have produced a great political and moral effect. It would have shewn to Europe,

that Buonaparté could not with impunity abstract the whole of his military force to foreign objects, but that he must keep a certain portion of it to defend his own coasts, and protect his naval arsenals. Some gentlemen seemed to think that an expedition ought rather to have been sent to the north of Germany, in which there had been some partial symptoms of insurrection against France. Now, this was not a question altogether of policy, but of justice also. It appeared to him that the only circumstances in which justice and humanity would allow us to interfere in any continental insurrections, were, first, if the people of any country having well weighed their peculiar circumstances, should determine that it was better to run the extremest dangers of war, than submit to the degree of oppression under which they laboured. In this case, it would certainly be just, and becoming the dignity of this country, to assist those who were previously determined on breaking their chains.—There was another case, in which also it would be just and allowable to interfere ; if we could send large armies which were themselves nearly a match for the utmost strength of the enemy, and which we were willing to commit, as fully as the country itself was to be committed which we came to assist. We had, however, no right, to stimulate other people to struggle, unless we were previously determined to support them with our utmost means, whether it might suit our convenience or not. Considering how very partial the insurrection in the north of Germany was, it would have been most unjust to the people of that country to stimulate them to insurrection, without a determination to support them to the utmost ; and it would have been most impolitic to have come to such a determination, in the present state of Europe. If we could send one of those great substantive armies, such as traversed Germany in the thirty years war, like a nation among nations, carrying its own magazines with it, then perhaps the North of Germany might have been the proper destination. The case was, however, now widely different. But if there was a country in which it would be perfectly just to interfere, Spain was that country. There the torch of insurrection was every where lighted and every where burning, and therefore we exposed the people of that country to no additional danger by giving them our assistance. We did not however pretend

to commit ourselves to the same extent that the Spanish nation was committed. It was always understood that the British army was lent to them as a trust to be restored, not given as a loan to be expended. At present there was no question about this country raising any general confederacy against France. That, in the present situation of things, would be an idle speculation. But if any country was resolved to make an effort to break its chains, that country became our ally. We must not either attempt to raise a spirit when it was not previously to be found, nor to keep it alive longer than its natural term. An hon. gent. (Mr. Ward) who had seconded the Amendment with so much ability, had expressed most desponding feelings with respect to Spain. He had drawn partly from local knowledge, a sort of picture of Spain, from which it appeared that an indisposition existed on the part of the constituted authorities in Spain, to give the people an interest in the struggle. It had been said, why not endeavour to effect a change internally? Any condition almost might be coupled with assistance, with less danger than an attempt at internal amelioration. Before you confer a benefit, you cannot go with the Koran in one hand and a sword in the other, to change the habits and religion of those you would aid. Such attempt never failed to excite a jealousy not easily allayed. He was not nice in the means he made use of to thwart the views of Buonaparté. He would gladly press a combination of all nations, and of all religions, into a phalanx to oppose him. He would unite with the Turk without requiring him to lay aside the turban, and he would march to the field with the poor bigotted Spaniard, without first insisting on his divesting himself of superstition. He would let every man fight in his own way. Some were of opinion, that no aid should have been granted till the Cortes were convoked. But he should be very sorry to have to answer for such conduct, as it would have been a sure way of creating intestine divisions, as the clashing interests of the several provinces might have produced the most fatal consequences. Thus, had the Castilian Cortes been assembled, Buonaparté, by calling the Arragonese against them, might have divided Spain within herself more completely than she was divided by the Ebro. Spain, with all her faults, deserved assistance of England, and it was not for us to be particular

about the weapons with which our enemy was assailed. He could give no opinion for or against an enquiry into the affairs of Spain. If ministers thought it would be proper, he had no objection. He feared, however, that that part of the enquiry into the expedition to Spain, which might throw blame upon the Spaniards for want of co-operation, would not be of service to this country, but might injure its interests in its future connection with Spain. He did not mean to speak against lord Wellington when he said that the march to Talavera was his own act. He approved of it, "and of the honours bestowed on that gallant officer. We ought not to undervalue the hero's laurels, even though they were barren. Had valour so long been admired and at last lost its value? Had we on a sudden become so enlightened that we could contemplate it with philosophical apathy? He knew the moralist might shudder at the shedding of human blood; he knew

"That reason frowns at war's unequal game,

"Where thousands bleed to raise a single name."

Yet still was lord Wellington entitled to the gratitude of his country, and the glories of Talavera he could not think purchased so dearly, as to be for ever deplored.—Before he sat down, he had one word to add on a subject which applied more particularly and personally to himself. He was opinion that the dignity and the decency of the House, and the respect that was due to the feelings of individual members, should prevent a subject, that had been touched on in the course of the debate, from being discussed in that House, but for himself he would say, that it was his fixed determination, that no provocation whatever should induce him to enter into any discussion on that particular topic. [Mr. C. alluded here to his dispute with lord Castlereagh.]

Mr. *Whitbread* said, that it was rather strange that the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not deigned to give them his idea of the state of the country, or to inform them upon what grounds he himself was the minister. He had given way to the right hon. gent. who had spoke last, because he conceived that he wished to make some explanations on what was certainly a very delicate subject. As far as this respected the individuals concerned, it certainly was not a subject which any gentleman would wish to bring into discussion in that House. The right hon. gent. had, however, now to answer, not to

that other individual, but to the country, why he suffered the noble lord to remain in office when he was convinced that he was not fit for the situation in which he was placed. He did hope that this would, on a future day, be made the subject of substantial inquiry, and that the right hon. gent. would be constrained to state to the House, and to the public, the reasons for his extraordinary conduct. The right hon. gent. had spoken on this subject with his accustomed fluency; but when it came to be considered what there was of argument in his speech, it would appear, that he meant to justify the Expedition which did take place, by comparing it to imaginary expeditions which did not take place. He also described the great advantages which would have taken place, if the Expedition had succeeded. Now it appeared, that so far from attracting the attention of Buonaparté to the most vital parts of his empire, he never deigned to look at our Expedition, or to turn his head that way. The mighty lion which we went to attack, brushed us off with one sweep of his tail. The right hon. gent. had then proceeded to argue that if that expedition could not have been useful, no other expedition could have been useful. His gallant friend (general Tarleton) had however pointed out another expedition, which would have promised a much better diversion to Austria. If he were to adopt the mother tongue of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer and of most of his associates in office, he would say, that although indictments had been presented, the various counts in them could not be proved. There was a vast variety of subjects, all of which demanded inquiry. He would wish to know, why, in a season of unexampled calamity, the meeting of Parliament was so long delayed? His Majesty had been advised to say, "that he would not institute any inquiry into the conduct of his military and naval commanders, but that he referred it to the wisdom of Parliament to take the matter into their serious consideration." Now although in common circumstances, Parliament had frequently not met sooner, yet, in the present extraordinary and perilous circumstances of the country, and when such a serious subject was to be submitted to the wisdom of Parliament, it appeared to him that they ought to have met sooner.—With respect to America, he also thought that there were most serious grounds for inquiry. He understood

that there had been suppression of material documents, and that the minister who was disavowed by his Majesty's government (Mr. Erskine), had a full justification for his conduct in signing the Treaty. He believed, that if the gentleman, who was at that time Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Canning) had displayed common wisdom and prudence in the negotiation, America would not only have been friendly at the present moment, but in alliance with us against France. Great expectations were, it seems, conceived from the resistance of Austria. It was thought she might effectually oppose the power of France; he confessed he was not one of those who cherished such expectations; he had no idea that had even the battle of Wagram, so fatal to Austria, been directly the reverse in its effect, it could have been so ruinous, as some supposed, to the power of Buonaparté. The war however once undertaken, and the two emperors finally committed, since England was to become active in the contest it was manifestly her interest to make an experiment in favour of Austria. How was this to be done? The noble lord said by an attack on Flushing. Was this attack even, however unconnected it might seem with its alledged object, made in time? Oh no, answered the noble lord, it was not: but then delay was inseparable from all insular Expeditions, and ministers should not be punished for the casualties of nature. Did the noble lord extend this apology beyond himself? Was he not the very first to deny its validity, when his opponents were in power? The delay, however proceeded not from any natural impediment, except that arising from the characteristic vacillation of the government; for it appeared upon the trial of general Monnet, that he had information of the intended descent as far back as the 22d of April. The noble lord, indeed, had not laid such stress upon the execution of the project as the King's Speech seemed to do; a Speech, which by that one paragraph where this Expedition was mentioned, tended to reflect still greater ridicule on the country than it had already experienced. What! could any one in his senses believe that for the contemptible object of blowing up a basin at Flushing, so much money ought to be cheerfully squandered, and so much precious blood cruelly expended. The King's Speech, however, perfectly accorded with his Answer to the Corporation of London—an Answer which declared



that the Expedition had only succeeded in part. In what part, was the natural question of every man in the country? Now, however, the mystery was solved; the part in which it succeeded was, in the blowing up of a basin! This, say ministers, was one of the objects, and the King is satisfied with its accomplishment. So little satisfied was he, however, on this head, that this very ground he should conceive sufficient as a foundation for a criminatory resolution. Ministers, it seemed were aware even of the fatality of the climate; but this was one of the casualties of war, and therefore, in their opinion, ought to be cheerfully encountered. Certainly, if the object was worthy of the hazard; but here the object was contemptible, the means mighty, and the consequences ruinous. Even downright inactivity was preferable to such perilous and causeless exertion. The noble lord, however, reduced to his last shift, declared the object of the expedition to have been a *coup de main*!—What did he mean by a *coup de main*? Did he suppose that Antwerp and Lillo, and the fortified forts, and the well-secured fleet in the Scheldt, were all to be taken by this miraculous *coup de main*? The idea was surely too preposterous even to enter into the calculations of his lordship. To shew, indeed the perfect folly of such a supposition, the resistance of Flushing, the continuance of which was sufficient to frustrate all the ulterior objects of the Expedition, was, in the opinion of Buonaparté, so ill protracted, that he condemned the officer who conducted it to death! How did this mismanagement of the right hon. gent. and his colleagues take place? He begged pardon—he supposed it was at the time when the right hon. gent. did not know his own colleagues; when he was hawking about the offices of the government, with “who’ll take this, and who will take that? In pity, will no one even accept my bounty to support me?” He supposed it was during this interregnum that the mismanagement took place. An opportunity of remedying it had, however, offered when lord Chatham made the communication that he could not proceed; then we should have evacuated the island; but instead of this we proceeded to build barracks there, and ships were actually arriving with stores for them, when the army was embarked to return.—Yet such had been the objects of the enormous but fruitless expence which the

country was to pay. Even then upon these grounds, as he had already stated, he should judge his Majesty’s government deserving of punishment. But who were his Majesty’s government? How did the right hon. head of it attain that elevation? Rumour said, it was by a successful competition with one of his own colleagues. Yet even this motley administration, this government of threads and patchwork, was to be screened; and the Amendment which proposed an inquiry into their conduct was to be rejected. Why—“Because it proposed condemnation without inquiry.” It did no such thing: it proposed as the only atonement to an injured and insulted country for dreadful calamities, to institute an inquiry into their causes. No doubt, indeed, if this inquiry terminated in conviction, that punishment would follow; unless it did, the inquiry would be but a mockery of justice; unless it did, the House might just as well rest contented with the papers as a substitute for the inquiry. Let those who wished for justice vote for the Amendment: in his opinion they must do it; for, in the *prima facie* case, there was a decisive incontrovertible conclusion against ministers. He was not to be understood by this as condemning the naval or military commanders who were employed in its execution. No; an inquiry here was indeed necessary; it remained to be seen whether they had failed from any misconduct of their own, or whether in the very outset, all hopes of success were blighted by the imbecility of those who appointed them, and by the folly of the orders they received. How fatal were all the measures of government! how contrary to all natural expectations! did the Chancellor of the Exchequer recollect—would his bickerings with his colleagues allow him to recollect in what a proud situation he stood at the conclusion of last session? Spain protracting the contest, and Austria, after a few years peace, flourishing and zealous, entering into the war! ministers at least considered this a proud situation. He confessed he never looked with much hope to the exertions of Austria; he did not even think that she entered into the war upon just grounds. She was boundlessly increasing her force, France demanded its diminution, and with this demand Austria refused to comply. The very refusal authorised a war; for if two powers (as France and England) were

at war, and a third power (Austria) naturally connected with one of them, encreases her force, and refuses to diminish it at the desire of the other, the inference can only be that she was preparing for hostility; let it be recollected also that on this very ground, and with infinitely less reason, England herself broke the Treaty of Amiens. From such prospects he now turned to the affairs of Spain. Even with all his respect for lord Wellington, he could not approve of the battle of Talavera—it had no good end, and only tended to establish what was never questioned, the superior valour of our soldiers. Our victories, indeed, were this night the particular theme of congratulation; and Maida, Corunna, Vimiera, and Talavera, were held up as monuments of our eternal glory; he beheld them only as so many gladiatorial exhibitions. None of them were happy in their consequences or beneficial in their results. Maida left the inhabitants in the same state in which ministers said, had we made a diversion in the north of Germany, we should have left the inhabitants of that country, at the mercy of a cruel enemy. At Corunna we lost general Moore, to prove the valour of our soldiers. What! was our population so redundant that we could spare men to prove what no one doubted? Was the valour of Britain so questionable, that a bloody experiment was necessary to prove it? Had we so many skilful generals, that they were become superfluous? Alas! how shall we dry up the tears of the orphan, or reimburse the exhausted means of the beggared citizen! The battle of Vimiera, followed by the disgraceful Convention of Cintra, had better never have taken place; and Talavera was, at best, but an exhibition of rash confidence and victorious temerity. The right hon. gent. had said last session, that a battle ought never to be risked in Spain, until there was an efficient government in that country; yet he now recanted the principle, by conferring honours upon sir Arthur Wellesley—for whom, and for the country, it would have been much more honourable, had he never changed his name. His conduct in Spain seemed the result of infatuation. After defeating Soult, he re-crossed the Douro, for the purpose of forming a junction with Cuesta; and yet when that was effected, he remained unaccountably inactive. Soult in the mean time recovered, recruited, and re-established his corps. He then fought the battle of Talavera;

and in four or five days afterwards retreated to an unhealthy province, at an unhealthy season, for the purpose, as he singularly termed it, of “refreshing his troops.”—In the marshes of Estremadura, he remained some months, and then retreated to Portugal, for the purpose of defending it.—The excuse alledged for this was, that we would not take supplies as the French did. If the Spaniards were glad of our assistance, there would be no necessity for force; we should receive voluntary supplies. But the truth was, while we were starved, the French were fed, and this he considered as the strongest presumption of the jealousy of Spain towards us.—He could not help now alluding to the very extraordinary transactions which had taken place in our cabinet; but before he did so, he must notice some expressions of the right. hon. gent. (Mr. Canning) which had much delighted him. He had said, that in a good cause he would seek the assistance of men of all religions: the Turk and the Christian; the Jew and the Pagan, were to him, politically considered, equal. No doubt, then, now that he and the noble lord were emancipated from the shackles of bigotry, they would unite with the friends of toleration in support of unlimited religious freedom. He wished particularly to know, why lord Wellesley delayed so long in this country after his appointment to the Spanish embassy. He was particularly anxious to know this, on account of a paragraph which had appeared in a well known publication, stating that “had it not been for a fit of illness, the noble marquis would have been long since in Spain.” Now it was well known, that the right hon. gent. wished to incorporate lord Wellesley in the government at home, and he had only to hope that this interested feeling did not occasion his lordship’s protracted delay in England, when he should have been fulfilling the functions of his important mission. On this subject he should hereafter demand an explanation from the right hon. gent. To Spain, however, at last, the noble marquis went, and there, what were his services? Why, he went through the mimicry of dancing on the French flag! He did more; he visited the Junta, went through all the routine of etiquette and politics, made a speech about reform, took his glass after dinner, and religiously roasted the Pope! It was surprising indeed, to see him so soon returning after

his flirtation with the whore of Babylon, at Cadiz! On his return, of course, when the places were going, he came in for his share, and made one of the administration; an administration, the members of which could not have been distinguished, had it not been for the motions that day, for the issuing of writs. It was made up indeed by a kind of political ballot—one gentleman (Mr. S. Dundas) had gone the entire circumnavigation of office, from the Board of Controll to the Irish Secretaryship! On that day a writ had been moved tendering his seat vacant, in consequence of his receiving a situation which he believed was not yet in his possession! The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, however, at length compiled an administration; and, indeed he had fully shewn that, supported by the favour of the court, he felt little fear in stemming the authority of the people. But how did the right hon. gent. proceed to form even this administration? Why, the very first application he made was to a dear friend of his, a noble lord, with whose principles he had been at war all his political life. This tender was rejected by them in a manner worthy of their dignity, and the rebuff which they gave the right hon. gent. would have daunted any man of less temerity than himself. There was not a man in the country, from the Orkneys to the Land's End, who did not pronounce him and his administration weak, incapable, and inefficient. Even with the addition of the two colleagues who had deserted them, they were feeble, but they then stood on a principle, or rather in opposition to a principle; but now, rejected by all who were worthy, the weak, and old, and infirm, were collected from the hedges and high-roads, and consorted with for want of better. The motley combination was duly appreciated by the people—no one respected them—they might now exclaim “the church is in danger,” but every one would know they meant “my place is in danger.” Now the time was come when it would be manifested that the people had a voice as well as the crown, and would not be imposed on by a set of adventurers who had usurped the government, supported by nothing but the favour of the crown. Threats had been held out by the runners of the government, that, as on a former occasion, a dissolution of parliament would be now resorted to. He believed in his soul government dared

not realize the threat; but if they did, it would only leave them ten times as bad as they were before.—Pompous language as to the flourishing state of our revenue was however held out. But was it sound at bottom? Was there a legitimate trade? Was it not a system placing (by the requisition of licenses) the merchants under the controul of government? Was it not rather the chicanery of smugglers and pirates, than the fair, liberal, open and honest commerce of merchants? But our Treasury was full. Aye, by the rigorous severity with which the taxes were collected. Under the system pursued, the collection of the Property-tax would soon be in the hands of government collectors. Indeed, the liberty of the subject was directly struck at by the method in which the taxes were collected. He gave it as his sincere advice: let an economical reform be instituted before the last ounce was exacted, and the country reduced to despair. Let a government be removed to which the people had refused their confidence. Let our relative situation with the enemy be well considered. Let the policy of succouring Spain be also weighed under the existing circumstances: Austria gone—the French force concentrated, and that country their only object. It was said, that we might defend Portugal with 30,000 men; but would not Buonaparté know our force even to a drummer, and where we had 30,000 he would have 60,000. Who would struggle against such fearful odds? Our remaining some time unmolested in that country should be no argument for our continuance there. We remained just at the will of the French Emperor, and at his option he could drive us out of it.—But what could be expected from such a ministry, or rather from a single man, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer was now alone—alone, after sounding his ineffectual war-whoop—alone, after fully exposing his weakness, and shewing it exceeded only by his rashness. The marquis Wellesley, of whom such account had been made, he considered completely insignificant.—Who was he? The governor of India—the man who had scarcely escaped the censure of that House for his cruel tyranny!—the man who had assailed the press, the sacred palladium of the people! the friend of despotism—the foe to liberty. Good God! could this man say to Buonaparté, in the noble indignation of insulted virtue, “I have not done as you have?”

Alas, if such a man had strength, he would indeed be a fearful acquisition to such a government; but he was known, and therefore weak and harmless. Peace should be the cry of the nation. Peace—particularly because the thralldom of millions of our fellow-subjects was the tenure by which this incapable Junta held their offices. “It has been said by our enemy, (said Mr. W.) that the genius of France guided our armies. Alas! it now presides in our cabinet; for surely, whether we consider their ignorance, their imbecility, their bigotry, or the fate with which Providence visits all their measures, our enemy, had he the nomination, could not select men more suitable to his ends, or more pernicious to our interests.”

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then rose, and said, that the hon. gent., who had just sat down, had urged it, as a serious charge against him, that he had not taken an earlier part in the debate, and accused him of disrespect to the House, in having remained so long silent. But no sooner had the hon. gent. preferred that charge, than he put a variety of questions to him, to which he demanded a categorical answer. The best answer, that could be given to this charge, had been supplied by the hon. gent. himself, viz. that “being,” to use his mother-tongue, “under many indictments, and each indictment consisting of many counts,” it was not unnatural, it was not inconsistent with common justice, that he should be desirous to hear those indictments and the arguments and proofs, by which they were supported, before he should plead or enter upon his defence. When the House recollected that it was not until he heard the hon. gent., that he could be aware of many of the questions, which he had to answer, or of many of the indictments against which he had to defend himself, it would, he was sure, acquit him of any thing like intentional disrespect, for not having risen sooner. It was, in point of fact, because he expected to hear from the hon. gent., and some of those who sat near him, all those charges which he should have to answer, that he had not offered himself to the attention of the House at an earlier period of the debate. There was also another reason why he wished to hear the hon. gent. and others, on that side of the House, before he rose; he wished to know whether the Amendment which they had proposed was all the amendment which they meant to offer to the Address, or

whether they meant to propose any other alterations. The Amendment which had been proposed only applied to that part of the Address which related to the tender of papers respecting the expedition to Walcheren, and would of course leave untouched all the remaining parts of the Address. He was anxious to know, therefore, whether the gentlemen on the other side had made up their own minds as to what they wanted the House to do upon this occasion—whether they had any other Amendments to offer? If they had, they were bound in common candour, though not perhaps in strict form, to state at once what were their intentions. It appeared to him rather extraordinary, that, if they had any thing to suggest with regard to the other parts of the Address, they had not stated it in the Amendment, for certainly in their speeches they had alluded to the campaign in Spain and Portugal, as well as to the Expedition to the Scheldt, though no part of the Amendment applied to that campaign. But he really believed that the gentlemen on the other side who had spoken, were not aware of any intention to propose any further Amendment, if it really existed, for if they had they would in candour have announced that intention.—Amongst the many questions which had been put to him there was one to which, entering fully into the feeling which had been so eloquently expressed by his right hon. friend below him (Mr. Canning) he wished to say as little as possible now, or at any other time. Upon that subject, therefore, he should only state thus much, that with regard to the transactions to which the hon. gent. had alluded, he could assure him and the House, that he was entirely ignorant of their existence until the close of the sessions of parliament, and when he did know of them, he certainly did conceive, whatever might be the motive which induced his right hon. friend to wish for the removal of his noble friend from the department confided to him, that he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) could not be a party in them, more especially as an expedition of great importance was at that time in great forwardness, with which the noble lord (Castlereagh) was intimately connected. All that he had done on that occasion, arose from an anxious desire to preserve to the country the services of both the individuals alluded to. Feeling as he did the utmost admiration of the splendid talents and eloquence of his right

hon. friend (Mr. Canning,) and thinking most highly of the abilities of his noble friend (lord Castlereagh,) he certainly felt himself bound both by inclination and duty to do every thing that it was in his power to do to retain both of them in the service of their country. This was his only object, never having partaken in any opinion of the inability of his noble friend, but thinking that he was as able, as useful, and as efficient a minister as the office which he filled ever possessed. Having said thus much upon this delicate subject, he should not go any further into the question. The hon. gent. had next put to him some questions respecting the situation which he had the honour to hold in his Majesty's councils, to which questions he begged to answer in the most explicit and distinct manner: that situation was not in any manner an object of his own desire; on the contrary, if his wishes could have been realized, another person would now have held the office of First Lord of the Treasury. After the resignation of the noble duke lately at the head of the administration, his Majesty had directed him and a noble friend of his, to make an application to two noble lords, for the purpose of forming an extended administration.—This command his noble friend and he obeyed, and, upon a foundation such as this, it was, that the hon. gent. had accused him of having hawked about the offices of government.—[Here Mr. Whitbread said, across the table, "No, no." ]—The Chancellor of the Exchequer continued, and observed, that that was what he understood the hon. gent. to say, and the whole tenor of his argument proved, according to his conception of it, that that was what he meant. The situation of the country was obviously such as required as strong an administration as could be formed, and he did think that there existed circumstances at the time the application was made, which rendered it not improbable that that application would not have been unsuccessful. But if he was to be accused of arrogance, and of wishing to reign without a rival, as had been insinuated by the hon. gent. it was strange that he should have made this application to the two noble lords, and more especially when he informed the House that the first proposition which he should have made to them, if they had given him an opportunity of stating it, would have been that it should be left to themselves to determine who should be the First Lord of

the Treasury. With respect to himself he again repeated that it was a situation which he did not desire. That he had afterwards accepted the office was true, and his principal motive was, that he felt himself bound, by every consideration of duty and principle, not to suffer his sovereign to be dictated to, and not to leave his Majesty without a minister. He had already stated the proposition he meant to make with respect to the office of First Lord of the Treasury; with regard to the other offices of government, it was natural to conceive that they were to be at the disposal of those who contributed to the formation of the administration. If there was any thing in this statement that rested solely upon his assertion, the fault did not rest with him, for he had no opportunity afforded to him of conveying to the two noble lords the nature of the proposal he meant to make. But the hon. gent. seemed to think that there was something unaccountable, almost absurd in the offer which he had made to the two noble lords, and that it was highly honourable in them to have refused it.—Upon this point he begged to repeat what he had stated before, that it appeared to him, that there were then in existence circumstances which afforded a greater chance of the success of his application than at any other time. The first was, though this might appear a trifling consideration, the period of the year. Some time had elapsed since the prorogation of Parliament, when political animosities might naturally be supposed to be irritated and augmented by the contests in which the different parties were engaged in Parliament, and the lapse of time might naturally be supposed to have cooled much of party animosity. This, however, he mentioned only as a slight circumstance; but there were others in his mind of much more importance. The hon. gent. had asked how he could expect that any union could take place among those who differed so radically? Most certainly very considerable differences had subsisted between the noble lords to whom he made the application, and the administration of which he was a member, but he thought that there was less chance that these differences would prevent an union at that time, because the grounds of many of those differences had been removed. With respect to Austria, the war had nearly terminated; certainly the relative situation of Austria and France appeared to be ripening to a

crisis which would unite all opinions; and therefore the question respecting the propriety of taking a part in the contests on the continent, which formed one of the points of difference, was on the eve of being removed. With respect to Spain and Portugal, he thought there could exist no difference of opinion as to the propriety of giving assistance to those injured nations, as long as they felt the inclination, or possessed the means of defending themselves. That question, however, was open for discussion. With regard to America, there certainly did appear to exist greater difficulties in reconciling the differences which had subsisted between them; but even upon this point, widely as they had disagreed, the obstacles to an union did not appear to be insuperable. One of the great leading points of difference respecting America arose upon the Orders in Council, which the two noble lords had represented as most impolitic in principle, and as being, in their operation, big with ruin to the commerce of this country. Fortunately the policy or impolicy of the Orders in Council then no longer remained a question of theory; it had been determined by the evidence of facts. So far from having ruined the commerce of the country, as had been confidently predicted, they had been productive of the most beneficial consequences. He was now happy to have it in his power to state, that the trade of this country in the last year, that is, to the quarter ending in October last, was, not only greater than it was the year before, but than it ever had been even in the most prosperous period. The exports for the year ending in Oct. 1809, were greater by seven millions than during the most prosperous years of trade in the most favourable time of peace; and, by ten millions, than during any preceding year of war. He did not mean to say that there were not other circumstances which had operated with the Orders in Council to augment our commerce, but he had stated enough to shew that there was nothing so inconsistent with common sense; nothing so calculated to ruin the trade of this country, in the Orders of Council, as the noble lords had contended. He had therefore flattered himself that he should have been able to remove one great ground of difference between those noble lords and himself, by an appeal to the experience and the incontestible evidence of facts. Another essential point of difference cer-

tainly was the Catholic Question; but there again it appeared to him that the obstacles to an union had been, in a great degree, removed. After the noble lord and the right hon. gent., who had presented the Catholic Petitions to both Houses of Parliament, had been disavowed by the Catholics, with regard to the offer which they had made relative to the *veto* on the appointment of bishops, he did think that they would naturally have come to the determination of not again supporting that Petition, until the Catholics should agree to that proposition, which the noble lord and the right hon. gent. had deemed so essential. And as it did not appear probable that the Catholics of Ireland would agree to that proposition, there seemed to be reasonable ground to believe that there was a greater chance of a concurrence of opinion, to a certain extent at least, between those two noble lords and the administration, than had heretofore existed. Under all these circumstances, he certainly had felt and thought, that there was a great probability that his proposition would have been acceded to, and that those two noble lords would have concurred with him in thinking, that in the present state of the country, it ought to be the wish of all men, of all parties, that the strongest and most efficient government should be formed. These were the reasons which had induced him to make the offer upon which the hon. gent. had commented so strongly. He could assure the hon. gentleman that, if he had anticipated that the proposition could have been deemed dishonourable to the character of those noble lords, he should have felt it dishonourable to his own character to tender it. But then the hon. gent. asked, why, after this symptom of weakness, as it had been called, he had accepted his present office! He had accepted it because his offer having been refused, no option was afforded him but either to take the official situation which he had then the honour to hold, or to leave his Majesty to be dictated to by those who differed from him in opinion. He had yet to learn, that under such circumstances, he ought to have deserted his sovereign. He believed that there was not a gentleman opposite who, if he felt the same conviction on the point to which he alluded as that which he entertained, would, under such circumstances, have abandoned the interests of his royal master. The hon. gent. declared, that he

wished to see the present administration removed, and another set of ministers appointed in their room. He did not mean to speak presumptuously, though the hon. gent. opposite (Mr. Whitbread) might think his language had that tendency; but, looking at the gentlemen opposite to him, and giving them full credit for the talents and eloquence which they possessed, he did not think that they would possess more of the good opinion of the House and of the country than he and his colleagues did. The hon. gent. had expressed his decided disapprobation of the whole conduct of administration, from the time the duke of Portland came into office; but in deciding upon the character of an administration, it was necessary to compare their claims with those of other administrations, and he should be glad to know what reason there was to suppose that the state of this country was worse, with regard either to its foreign or domestic relations, under their administration, than it would have been if the gentlemen opposite to him had remained in office? Russia indeed, when the duke of Portland's administration came into office, was at war with France, but peace soon followed, and Russia became the ally of France. Unquestionably, no blame could be attributed to the noble duke or his colleagues for the treaty of Tilsit; indeed, from the language of Russia (who constantly complained of the preceding administration, from their unwillingness to make any exertions in the common cause), it was obvious that the defection of Russia must be attributed to them. He knew it would be said, that the hostility arose from the armament which had been sent against Copenhagen; but could any man seriously believe that there was nothing in the treaty of Tilsit which would have induced Russia to take part with France, even if the armament to Copenhagen had not taken place? The only difference would have been, that if that measure had not been adopted, we should have had all the Northern powers against us with much greater means of annoyance than they now possessed, and should have been shut out of the Baltic, instead of having the command of that sea. With respect to the affairs of the Peninsula, he could not tell how the hon. gentlemen opposite would have acted if they had remained in office, but he was inclined to think that upon every principle of policy and feeling they would have thought it expedient to give

every assistance in their power to Spain. Judging, however, as well as he could of the state of the world, he was firmly convinced that the state of Spain was much better now, as far as concerned this country, than it was when the duke of Portland's administration came into office. Even were France ultimately to subdue Spain, an event which he most sincerely deprecated, she might hold the country in subjection, but she would possess diminished means of annoyance to Great Britain. She would not derive any revenue from her conquest, hostile as the sentiments of the Spanish people were to her. She would not be able to withdraw a single soldier from the Spanish territory. —Having said thus much on that point, he should now advert to a subject which would certainly be much better discussed when the materials were before the House. He had been asked by the hon. gent. what was the meaning of that part of the Address relative to the expedition to Walcheren? It did not appear to him that it required any explanation. The Address certainly did not pledge the House to institute inquiry into that expedition; neither did it pledge the House not to inquire into that expedition; it left that point open to the decision of the House, when the documents were produced. Certain information, as stated in his Majesty's Speech, would be laid before the House, and then it would be for the House to decide whether it would call for more; whether it would institute an inquiry at the bar; whether it would order an inquiry in a committee; or whether it would institute any inquiry at all.—With respect to the expedition to the Scheldt, that subject had been so ably discussed by his noble friend (lord Castlereagh), and by his right hon. friend (Mr. Canning) that it was not necessary for him to say much about it. If the House would recollect the state of the French and Austrian armies on the Danube, the state of the Tyrol, and the state of the north of Germany at the time when the expedition to the Scheldt was concerted, he was persuaded that they would concur in thinking that some attempt at diversion was most advisable; and unquestionably that operation, which had been preferred, was beyond all comparison the one which promised most effectually to benefit the cause of our allies, and to secure our own interests. The right hon. gent. opposite (Mr. Ponsonby) supposed that the Speech contained an

estimate of the value of the operations at Flushing very different from that formed by his right hon. friend (Mr. Canning.) It was not so. If the object of the expedition had been solely the destruction of the basin of Flushing, no one would deny that the end was not equivalent to the means by which it was to be obtained. But did it follow that the destruction of the basin at Flushing was not a very desirable object, and one of no small importance? It had been said by a right hon. gent. opposite, that the damage sustained by the enemy would soon be repaired. Now, the fact was, that the basin at Flushing had been two or three years in constructing; and it had been so completely destroyed, that the most able engineers had given it as their opinion, that it would be much easier to build it anew than to repair it. Was not this an important advantage? Was it not beneficial to place a principal naval station of the enemy in such a situation that it could not be of use in furnishing the means of annoyance against us for two or three years? Still he was willing to allow, that this would not have been a sufficient object for such an expedition. But the expedition had a much greater object in view; namely, the destruction of the arsenal and shipping at Antwerp. Nine or ten sail of the line had lately been launched there, and as many more were in a considerable state of advancement. A great hazard might wisely be run for the prospect of destroying such a maritime establishment. His majesty's ministers knew what they risked, but the object was worth the attempt. Besides, it was the best mode that could be devised, not to withdraw French troops from the Danube, but to prevent reinforcements of 25,000 or 30,000 men from going thither. A circumstance, which, when the nice balance that existed between the contending armies was adverted to, must appear to be of great consequence; even during the armistice this was a material consideration, and, therefore although the advantages were unquestionably lessened by the armistice, the expedition was notwithstanding, useful to Austria. The moment that Austria knew that such an expedition was in agitation, she entreated us to persevere in its completion. But the hon. gent. had accused his Majesty's government of sending supplies to Walcheren after it was in contemplation to abandon it. Let it be recollected, however, that had the armistice

been broken off instead of being confirmed, the evacuation of Walcheren would not have taken place. The right hon. gent. opposite asked of what value the possession of Walcheren could be to Great Britain? Though he (Mr. Perceval) consented to surrender it under the circumstances to which he had just adverted, he was ready to avow that he thought it of great value. Whether it was worth the expence of a garrison, however, was another question; and on a comparative view of the subject, that question had been decided in the negative. But to shew still more strongly the sense which the Austrians entertained of the value of this possession to their interests, he would only observe, that within a day or two of the conclusion of the armistice, Austria requested this country not to abandon Walcheren.—The next subject to which he came, was the appointment of lord Chatham to the expedition. The gentlemen opposite had indulged in reflections on that noble lord, which, considering the situation in which he stood, might with great propriety have been omitted. Whenever it was probable that the conduct of an individual would be subjected to an inquiry, justice demanded that the public mind should not be prejudiced against him. Was it fair to any officer, because he differed from others in politics, to be treated as this noble lord had been treated by the right hon. gent., and by the hon. general opposite? He was sure that the latter would feel the injustice of such a proceeding in his own case, and would deprecate the dissemination of opinions condemning his conduct, when that conduct was to become the subject of any investigation. Upon this point he should only make one more observation, viz. that the result of the inquiry, if any inquiry should be thought necessary, would, in a great measure, decide the question relative to the propriety or the impropriety of the appointment of that noble lord to the command of the expedition.—He could not, also, upon this occasion, avoid expressing his regret at the manner in which another noble lord (Wellington) had been attacked in his absence; if this practice were persisted in, it would damp the ardour, and check the spirit of our officers; for they would go out to fight the battles of their country with the melancholy conviction, that however great their exertions might be, their political adversaries would



in their absence eagerly seize upon every little event that could be construed into a disaster, for the purpose of wounding their feelings, depreciating their services, and attacking their characters.—The hon. gent., who had seconded the amendment, had also in his opinion, in a most unjustifiable manner, commented upon the conduct of several officers of a less elevated rank, who had been employed on most important services in Spain, whom he had chosen to term “military missionaries,” and whose interest he had described it to be to misrepresent the state of Spain, and the feelings of the Spanish people. Surely, it could not be supposed that gentlemen of high private characters and great professional reputation could feel any thing like a personal interest in keeping up the delusion, as it was called, with respect to the real state of Spain. But in the whole of the speech of the hon. gent. to whom he was now alluding, there was no part which he more sincerely regretted than that part of it, in which he spoke of the affairs of Spain, and of the exertions of the Spanish people. That the defenders of Saragossa and Gerona should be represented as exhibiting no single trait of generosity or enthusiasm was surely not liberal. Well, too, might that hon. gent. censure what had been done by his majesty’s government to aid the Spanish cause, when he said that that cause did not deserve success. For his part he was persuaded, that neither in ancient nor in modern history could such an example be found, of a country maintaining a contest like that which this “degraded” Spain and this “degraded” Spanish government had so long supported. Never, in recent times, had 250,000 Frenchmen been in a country for such a length of time without subduing it. Spain was not subdued; but what effect on the energies of Spain such language as had been used to night might produce, it was impossible to predict. It was much to be lamented that the struggle in Spain would probably be most severe; but the difficulties they encountered and the reverses they had sustained, had not yet had the effect of subjecting the determined resistance of the Spanish nation. At every defeat a new army sprang up; and the Spaniards, animated by their hostility to the usurper of their rights, would maintain a determined resistance to the last.—With respect to the late campaign, he could not agree with the hon. gentlemen

on the other side of the House; he could not agree that in any instance disgrace had followed our arms. As the movements of general sir John Moore in the year 1808, and the battle of Corunna, had saved the South of Spain that year, so he believed the expulsion of the French from Portugal and Galicia, the junction of lord Wellington with Cuesta, and the battle of Talavera, saved the South of Spain this year. What would have become of Spain if the British had not arrived at Portugal when Soult had taken Oporto? An hon. general opposite, had given a confident opinion that Portugal could not be defended with 30,000 men; but the hon. general seemed to forget that there was a native force of 40,000 Portuguese, trained and disciplined by British officers, and that it would require a vigorous effort on the part of the French to succeed against 30,000 British troops, and 40,000 native troops conducted by British officers.—There was only one point more to which he wished to advert. The hon. gent. who spoke last had asked his right hon. friend (Mr. Canning) when he had not an opportunity of answering, whether he had not kept from parliament last session a document which would have justified Mr. Erskine for signing the treaty with America? If there existed such a document it had escaped his recollection, and he was convinced that whoever had given the hon. gentleman his information had misled him. When this subject was under discussion last session his right hon. friend had stated his reasons for producing the document which was then produced, viz. to justify his Majesty’s government for refusing to agree to the Treaty signed by Mr. Erskine. He produced the Instructions sent to that gentleman to shew that they did not warrant him in signing that Treaty. His right hon. friend also stated, at that time, that what he was then saying, was not intended as an attack upon Mr. Erskine, but that there were other documents which might be produced if that gentleman felt them necessary for his justification. Upon the whole, he was convinced that the House could not agree to the Amendment, even upon the grounds stated by a right hon. gent. opposite to him, and it would see that the Amendment did not pledge it either to enter into an inquiry, or to avoid one, nor did it pledge the House to any opinion, upon any one point, of the conduct of ministers.

Mr. *Tierney* made some most pointed observations in reply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He remarked, that even by the admission of the right hon. gent., the men whom he put into office, were only placed there because no better could be found. He also challenged any one to deny, that in whatever company he had been, high or low, the present administration was spoken of in terms of contempt.

The House then divided; when the numbers were:

For the Amendment - - - 167

Against it - - - 263

Majority against the Amendment ——— 96

*List of the Minority.*

Abercromby, Hon. J.	Grenhill, R.
Adam, W.	Grenfell, P.
Agar, E. F.	Grosvenor, Gen.
Althorpe, Visc.	Grant, M.
Anstruther, Sir J.	Hall, Sir J.
Antonie, W. L.	Halsey, Jos.
Aubrey, Sir J.	Hamilton, Pitt
Baker, J.	Hammet, John
Baring, N.	Hibbert, G.
Baring, T.	Hippesley, Sir J.
Bernard, S.	Horner, F.
Biddulph, R. M.	Howard, H.
Bradshaw, Hon. A. C.	Howard, Hon. Wm.
Brogden, J.	Howorth, H.
Browne, N.	Hume, W. H.
Burdett, Sir F.	Hussey, W.
Byng, G.	Hutchinson, C. H.
Calcraft, J. (Teller)	Hurst, R.
Calvert, N.	Jackson, J.
Cavendish, Ld. G.	Jekyll, Joseph
Cavendish, Wm.	Kemp, T.
Cocks, J.	Knox, Hon. T.
Cochrane, Lord	Lamb, Hon. W.
Copper, Hon. E. S.	Lambton, R. J.
Coke, T.	Langton, W. G.
Coke, Ed.	Leach, J.
Colborne, N. W. R.	Latouche, D.
Cooke, B.	Latouche, J.
Craig, J.	Lemon, Sir W.
Creevey, T.	Lemon, John
Cuthbert, J. R.	Lemon, Charles
Curtis, Sir Wm.	Lloyd, J. W.
Daly, Rt. Hon. D. B.	Lubbock, Sir J.
Dickinson, W.	Lytleton, W. H.
Dundas, C.	Longman, G.
Dundas, Hon. L.	Lester, G.
Elliot, Rt. Hon. W.	Macdonald, J.
Euston, Earl	Mahon, Visc.
Fergusson, Gen.	Markham, J.
Fitzgerald, Lord H.	Milbanke, Sir R.
Fitzgerald, Rt. Hon. M.	Martin, H.
Fitzpatrick, Gen.	Mathew, General
Fitzroy, Lord Wm.	Maxwell, W.
Foley, Hon. N.	Mildmay, Sir H.
Foley, T.	Mills, W.
Folkestone, Visc.	Mills, C.
Foulkes, Sir M.	Milner, Sir W.
Frankland, W.	Mexborough, Earl
Fremantle, W. (Teller)	Milton, Viscount
Giles, D.	Moore, P.
Gower, Earl	Morpeth, Visc.
Grattan, H.	Morris, E.

Mosley, Sir O.	Smith, G.
Mostyn, Sir T.	Smith, W.
Neville, Hon. R.	Stanley, Lord
Newport, Sir J.	Stanley, J.
North, D.	Somerville, Sir M.
Nugent, Sir G.	Symonds, T. P.
Northey, W.	Talbot, Col.
O'Callaghan, J.	Tavistock, Marquis
O'Hara, C.	Tarleton, Gen.
Ord, W.	Taylor, M. A.
Ossulston, Lord	Taylor, C. W.
Parnell, H.	Temple, Earl
Peirse, H.	Templetown, Visc.
Pelham, Hon. C.	Thompson, T.
Percy, Earl	Tierney, Rt. Hon. G.
Piggott, Sir A.	Tighe, W.
Ponsonby, Rt. Hon. G.	Townsend, Lord J.
Ponsonby, Hon. G.	Turton, Sir T.
Porchester, Lord	Vansittart, G.
Power, R.	Vernon, G.
Prittie, Hon. F.	Walpole, Hon. G.
Pym, F.	Ward, Hon. J. W.
Pollington, Visc.	Warrender, Sir G.
Quin, Hon. W.	Western, C. C.
Romilly, Sir S.	Wharton, J.
Sheridan, R. B.	Whitbread, S.
Sebright, Sir J.	Williams, Sir R.
Studamore, R. P.	Williams, O.
Sharp, R.	Windham, Rt. Hon. W.
Shelley, T.	Winnington, Sir E.
Shipley, W.	Wardle, Col.
Smith, S.	Wynn, C.
Smith, T.	Wynn, Sir W. W.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Thursday, January 25.*

[VOTE OF THANKS TO LORD WELLINGTON.] Earl *Grey*, previous to the discussion of the next day on the intended Vote of Thanks to lord Wellington, thought it of considerable importance that some information should be laid before the House, by which they might be the better enabled to form an opinion with respect to the propriety of the motion. It was necessary they should know whether the advance of lord Wellington into Spain, was the exercise of his own discretion, or the result of the instructions of ministers, and with this view he should move for the instructions sent to lord Wellington. It was also of importance they should have before them the nature of the information communicated by lord Wellington respecting the action of Talavera, there being strong reason to believe that ministers, at the time they held out that battle as a victory, knew from what was stated by lord Wellington in his dispatches, that our army must retreat; and that the battle, said to be a victory, must be followed by all the consequences of defeat. His lordship therefore moved for the Instructions sent to lord Wellington; for the Dispatches received from him upon his

marching from Placentia; for the dispatches which he sent from Talavera after the battle; and also for certain correspondence between Lord Wellington and the Spanish government, respecting supplies for the army.

The Earl of *Liverpool* did not see the necessity of calling for any documents of the nature alluded to by the noble earl, for the purpose of discussing the motion for a vote of thanks to lord Wellington. The vote was a tribute to the bravery of the army, and the skill of the commander, and had no connexion with any enquiry into the merits of the campaign. He should therefore oppose the motion.

The Marquis of *Douglas* thought it highly necessary that they should have the proposed information before them, particularly when it was doubtful whether the purpose for which the battle of Talavera was fought was gained, or rather whether it had not wholly failed. There were other documents also which he thought of importance, and for which he should afterwards move.

Lord *Erskine* said, he should have great satisfaction, if unfettered by his situation in that House, in paying a tribute to the merits of lord Wellington, whom he considered as an able and accomplished officer. He thought it, however, essential, that they should have the proposed information before they proceeded to the discussion of a motion of thanks for the battle of Talavera. He would put an hypothetical case; suppose that the result of fighting a battle should be, although a victory was claimed, the failure of the main purposes of the campaign, would it not be essential that they should have information with respect to the reasons for adopting that measure, before they voted thanks for a victory which had produced only disastrous consequences?

The Earl of *Harrouby* maintained that it was not the practice to call for information, with the view of ascertaining the character of a victory when the only purpose in contemplation was the voting thanks to the commander. The precedents were all the other way. Thanks were voted for the victory of Maida, although, without meaning to convey the slightest reflection, it might be said to be little better than a barren laurel.

Earl *Grosvenor* contended, that it was impossible for that House to vote thanks for a mere isolated act of valour, without inquiring into the circumstances which

attended it. With respect to the battle of Maida, it was complete in its object, and the commander retreated at his option, but the only consequences of the battle of Talavera were the surrender of our sick and wounded into the hands of the enemy, and our being forced to retreat.

The Earl of *Lauderdale* thought the conduct of ministers extremely singular; an intention had been intimated by his noble friend on Tuesday night, of bringing forward a motion of inquiry into the conduct of the campaign in Spain, which necessarily involved the merits of the battle of Talavera, and yet this was not thought a sufficient reason to stop a motion for a vote of thanks for fighting that battle, although in the affair of Basque Roads the mere private intimation of a member of the House of Commons, that he should oppose a vote of thanks, led to a Court-martial on the commander.

Viscount *Sidmouth* was desirous that a full inquiry should take place, into the conduct of the campaign in Spain, and that the documents moved for by the noble earl, and many more, should be produced, but he did not think their production applicable to the intended motion for a vote of thanks. There was no precedent for calling for papers to inquire into the general conduct of a campaign with a view merely to a specific vote of thanks for a particular service. In the case of the battle of Corunna no question was made about the vote of thanks, although the campaign had been disastrous and demanded inquiry.

Earl *Grey* was by no means convinced by what he heard, that there was the slightest impropriety in his motions. Let the case be put hypothetically, of a commander advancing into a country, fighting a battle, claiming a victory, and in two days afterwards, being obliged to retreat before those whom he had defeated, and to leave in the hands of the enemy his sick and wounded; and surely their lordships must feel the necessity of having before them some information as to the circumstances attending this battle, and those which led to it, before they came to the discussion of a vote of thanks proposed to the commander. His noble friend had mentioned the battle of Corunna: when these thanks were voted, he was not in the House, but in that case, the gallant and distinguished officer who commanded, gained his object; the purpose of fighting was to secure a good retreat, and that

object was gained. But in the case of the battle of Talavera, it was doubtful whether it was a victory or not. Under these circumstances he thought it essential that the information moved for should be laid before the house.

The motions were then put and negatived.

[**LORD GAMBIER.**] Lord *Grenville*, understanding that a notice was given on Tuesday night for a motion of thanks to lord Gambier for the destruction of the French ships in Basque Roads, wished to call the attention of the House to the adoption of some mode for the purpose of rendering their proceedings regular. The last notice which appeared on the journals respecting lord Gambier was an intimation of his arrest, for the purpose of his being tried for his life and honour, before a Court-martial. If it was now thought expedient that thanks should be moved, it would be necessary that the proceedings of that Court-martial should be laid before the House, in order that they might have regularly before them, what had taken place since the arrest of lord Gambier. He therefore moved for the Minutes of the Court-martial.

Lord *Mulgrave*, with respect to what he had stated in a former session relative to lord Gambier, regretted that strangers were excluded, as it prevented that publicity being given to it which he wished. He had then intimated by his Majesty's commands, the arrest of lord Gambier, and had stated that the Court-martial had been summoned at the earnest request of lord Gambier, who in doing so, had been actuated by that high and honourable feeling which so peculiarly characterized British officers. With respect to the present motion, he objected to calling for the Minutes of the Court-martial, as that would appear as if it was wished to re-try the case. He thought the laying the Sentence before the House would be sufficient to render their proceedings regular, and answer all the purposes of the noble lord. He therefore moved as an Amendment to insert in the motion the Sentence instead of the Minutes.

Lord *Grenville* had no objection to the Amendment; he certainly did not wish to re-try the case, which, in his opinion, ought not to have been tried at all. His only object was that the Minutes would contain the most authentic particulars of the action, on which they might form an opinion with respect to the proposed Vote.

The Amendment was agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Thursday, January 25.*

[**DISPUTE WITH AMERICA.**] Mr. *Morris* rose and spoke to the following effect:—Sir, I was very anxious to have offered myself to your notice on the night of the last debate, after an allusion which had been made towards the close of it, to the provisional agreement which had been entered into by an honourable relation of mine (Mr. Erskine) as his Majesty's minister to the United States, but I am not sorry that I did not catch your eye, as I may perhaps hope to experience from the indulgence of the House, from the peculiar personal interest I feel in the question, as well as from its public importance, a more patient attention than could have been afforded at that late hour in its then exhausted state.—It is perfectly correct, as stated by my right hon. friend (Mr. Perceval), that the dispatch communicated to parliament, of the 23rd of January last, was the only dispatch by which conditions were prescribed to Mr. Erskine, for the concluding a provisional agreement; but I can by no means admit, that when he found that the conditions were impracticable according to the letter, he might not have found it expedient to refer to his other instructions for the purpose of ascertaining, whether he would be acting in conformity to the wishes of his Majesty's government, if he was to comply with the sense and spirit of his instructions, though he could not with the letter. I can, therefore, in no shape admit that the other dispatches might not have materially contributed to the judgment he formed, when he considered this substantial compliance with the instructions as within the scope of his duty. That he did so consider them, we have his own authority in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Smith, and which has been since published, in which letter he speaks of his several letters of instruction, as having led him to think that he should consult the views of his majesty's government, by following the spirit of his instructions when he could not have them complied with according to the letter. It is quite clear, therefore, that in his judgment, the other letters of instruction are material to the forming an opinion of his case—that opinion may be erroneous. We, the House, can be in no condition to call it so, unless the instructions are produced. Ministers may, if they please, withhold them; with

them rests the responsibility. I know no reason why they should. I am not aware of any objection which can be made to their being made public; but if they are not, the public is not in possession of the whole of his case, that must be before them in a disadvantageous light; and they are bound to say, that on grounds of public expediency, it is so left: but whatever may be said on the subject of instructions, though these instructions may be withheld, I am satisfied, that no objection can be raised to the production of the answer returned by him to the dispatch communicated to the House. I am wholly at a loss to conjecture why that was withheld. I cannot understand on what principle the dispatch was communicated, and not his answer—his answer, which contained the terms he had obtained, which would have proved, that in what he had obtained those very conditions were substantially recognized—recognized, in the only way in which they could have been recognized, consistent with the forms of the American government. There can be no note in writing from the American executive—they have no power, no authority to give it. This official recognition is as binding, therefore, as any note in writing could be. I am the more astonished that this communication was not produced, because I find that Mr. Jackson adverts to it, and says, that it appears from thence, that the conditions were sent over to Mr. Smith; that Mr. Erskine had repeated in that communication, *verbatim et seriatim*, what had passed in his conferences with Mr. Smith, on the subject of these conditions; so that not only the existence of the document is thus publicly admitted, but its contents; and that they are obviously most important to the decision of the question there can be no doubt, when it is the statement of what passed between him and Mr. Smith, at the time of entering into the agreement, and contains the pledge of the American government, the official recognition by the American executive, of those very conditions in substance, though not in the form required. It is the having withheld this dispatch that I cannot but consider as a great injury to the reputation of my relation, who was held up to the country as having given up every thing and gained nothing? when, if this communication had been laid before parliament, they would have been able to judge, whether he was right in considering that he had

thus obtained the substance of the conditions prescribed, though not the letter, and thereby accomplished the object of his majesty's ministers, in the only practical way they could be accomplished. Let it not be supposed for a moment, that he was vain or silly enough to substitute views of policy of his own for those of his government—it was their policy, their system; it is on the supposed adoption of their policy, and their system in its sense and spirit, that he puts his justification. I shall not trespass any farther on the House on this part of the subject, as a notice just given by my hon. friend (Mr. Whitbread) will afford an early opportunity for that purpose; but there is another point, of at least equal importance to the character of my honourable relation, which I am most anxious to set right—I do not mean to say, that Mr. Jackson has directly asserted that Mr. Erskine was ordered to give an explanation to the American government of the reasons which had influenced his Majesty's minister to disavow the arrangement he had made; but if he is not to be considered as asserting, at least he insinuates it so strongly, that I am bound on the part of my hon. relation to say, that he was not ordered to give that explanation—that he was not authorized to give it either directly or indirectly: and I am the more anxious to state this, because reasons were assigned for his having withheld it, of a private and personal nature; he is supposed to have withheld it from some delicacy attaching to the peculiar situation in which he found himself from the disavowal; nay, more, he is supposed to have relied on the goodness of the President, as affording him an excuse in that respect. What is this, in other words, but saying, that he was guilty of a dereliction of his public duty from some considerations which were purely personal to himself; and how is this charge aggravated when that explanation having been withheld, is one of the principal complaints made by the American government; so that from some supposed personal motive he has abstained from the discharge of his public duty, and by so doing, has increased the irritation already excited in that country? What is the House to think, when I state that he was not ordered or authorized to make the communication, and that under the circumstances in which he was placed, to have made that communication

without order or authority, would have been to the last degree indecorous or unjustifiable? From Mr. Jackson's mode of describing that explanation, too, it does not seem as if the communication of it was likely to have conciliated the American government. The forcible terms in which it was said to have been conveyed, do not sound as if they were likely to have allayed the resentment, or soothed the feelings of the American government; but whether they were or not, he had no discretion given to him upon the subject; and to make a charge upon him for having kept back this explanation, from motives of a private nature, is to inflict a wound upon his reputation. I do not mean to lay any imputation upon Mr. Jackson. I must presume he acted according to the best of his judgment in the discharge of his public duty; but, Sir, I deny that any motives for embarrassment existed, or any cause from which it could have arisen—that Mr. Erskine had hoped to have considered himself the instrument of his Majesty's government, for allaying the animosity which had unhappily prevailed between Great Britain and America, is most true; that he had hoped to bring about, with due attention to his instructions, a re-union between two countries connected by ties of blood, by identity of interests, by congenial sentiments of liberty, at a time when the very name of it is banished from the rest of the civilized world; that he had hoped to have accomplished this, not a tame, passive re-union, but one which would lead to cordial, active co-operation against France; that this was a proud object of ambition, and that he was humbled, mortified, and grieved when he found that he had failed, I am free to admit; that his being thus mistaken in his view of what were the wishes of his Majesty's government, and that this mistake was painful to him in the extreme, I believe; but that there were any other sentiments, or any ideas of delicacy or embarrassment, which induced him to swerve from any part of his duty, or that he could have suppressed explanation from the influence of any such feelings as those ascribed to him, I utterly deny. I have addressed the House somewhat more at length than I originally intended, and I thank them for the attention with which they have listened to me; and the great interest which I cannot but take in the subject must be my apology.

[THE LORDS' COMMISSIONERS' SPEECH.] Lord Bernard appeared at the bar, with the report of the Address to his Majesty, in answer to his most gracious Speech.

Sir Francis Burdett rose, and began by observing, that he had paid that attention that was due to the sentiments of the different gentlemen, gentlemen who had already delivered their respective opinions on the various topics which the full discussion of the King's Speech naturally embraced. He had listened, he hoped, with equal candour, to the defence of the men who thought themselves still qualified to govern the country, and to the arguments of those who thought themselves better fitted for that arduous situation; and the result of the whole was, to confirm more and more that calm conviction of mind, with which he had entered that House, of the necessity, sooner or later, of an entire change of system; of a thorough, constitutional, and temperate reform in parliament. When they considered the extent and nature of the failures abroad, the numerous instances of obstinacy, fatuity, and incapability at home, that had stigmatized the short period of time since their last meeting in that place; and when they compared, with that consideration, the confidence that the majority of that assembly were still willing to repose in the authors of our disgraces, it did appear to him astonishing, how any well-meaning reflecting man could doubt, that there was something in our system radically wrong. With respect to the leading complaints made against the present ministers, never were men in such a state of self-abandonment; they had nothing to say for themselves, and could have confidence in nothing but in that assembly, in which there seemed to be a mysterious something that might justify the most culpable in expectations the most extravagant, not only of impunity, but protection. This he did not say out of any sentiment of personal asperity to the gentlemen composing the present administration, and the principle of it, which, without a reform, it must have in common with every future administration: he spoke not against this individual or that, or in favour of this or that party. If gentlemen at this very awful crisis felt alarm, because the conduct of public affairs were intrusted to the present ministers, and thought that their apprehensions for the public safety could be removed only by the appoint-

ment of other men in their stead, more able, more experienced, or more honest, how should he (sir Francis) feel alarmed, when he could derive no one hope for the public benefit from any such change? Change of men would do nothing, could do nothing, while they would be necessarily obliged to act up to that fatal system in which all our real danger lies. Ministers were but the instruments in the hands of that pernicious system; and while they were but its passive instruments, they must work its destructive will. To him, therefore, it was idle to talk of a change of tools; it was to the design and nature of the work itself that he objected; and while he thought that big with peril to the constitution, perhaps the less skilful and adroit the workmanship the better. Among the many acts of the present administration, since the commencement of the recess, which had been the subject of general complaint, there was one of a nature more immediately growing out of that system to which he had alluded, and more directly to be traced to that bad source than any of the rest. He alluded to the treatment which his Majesty had been advised to give the first corporation in the empire. How, he asked them, could they otherwise account for that wild and preposterous policy, that could affect to find wisdom in an insult, inflicted by the crown on the corporation of the city of London. Did it not look as if it was essential to the preservation of that fatal system, to throw obstacles in the way of communication between the people and the throne? It naturally revolted at all means of facilitating the growth of that confidence between the King and his subjects, which of all other national blessings it had most reason to dread, and therefore was it urged, by the all-paramount motive of self-preservation, to keep wide asunder, to alienate the two parties, notwithstanding their common interests; because it well knew, that the fair, cordial, conciliatory, and constitutional commerce between both must precede its own radical extermination. It was to such a system that the insult given to the right of petition and remonstrance, was to be fairly traced; that system, he did not hesitate to say, owed its birth, and growth, and maturity, to the corrupt state of that assembly; for if ministers were not fully aware to what length they might safely go, and how readily they would be borne out in their most extravagant criminali-

ties, by the more extravagant servility of that assembly, was it to be believed that they would have had the temerity to advise the King to call in question the most valued privilege of the people of England, by such an insult as had recently been past upon the metropolis of the empire? The first and most respectable of all the corporations, the city of London, in bad times treated with respect, and, in the worst of times, never insulted with impunity: a corporation, not to say politically, but integrally, the first in the King's dominions; whether they considered the liberality of principle, the high honour, the rigid integrity, the immense wealth, the commercial influence, the great weight of political interest, which had so long constituted the inseparable characteristics of that body, and which, in the present times, distinguished so many of its members; to insult such a body, in regard to the disputed exercise of their long established corporate privileges, was to insult the whole people of this country. Was it not an unwise thing to engage his Majesty in an indecent struggle with such an important portion of his subjects? He knew of no more dignified prerogative to be exercised by the King, than that of admitting to his presence the loyal effusions of his people. Even William the Conqueror respected the privileges of the city of London; and William 3, evinced for them that sacred respect that was worthy such good privileges, and worthy of the good times of that Revolution, that more firmly established them. We knew that such formerly was the merited influence of this corporation, that the Convention Parliament thought the weight of the sanction of the city of London absolutely necessary to its existence. A body of such absolute and relative importance ought not to have been treated with levity, much less with insult. It was not long since an occurrence had taken place, which, by the interposition of that House, proved that the King himself could not turn aside or stop up a common bye-path in his own demesne. The question was brought to the test—He could not do it. If then, the executive power, armed with all its influence, could not turn a little footpath across his own park, what were we to think of those men who would dare to block up the great highways to the subjects hereditary right of Petition and Remonstrance. The right of Petition was

the subjects' high road to the throne—the Revolution opened that road, and it was essential to the health of the constitution that it should be kept at all times open, But to say nothing more upon the abstract right of the subject to Petition—to say nothing more of the peculiar weight and respectability of the party exercising that right in the present instance, he wished to ask, if the occasion of the Petition was not of a nature to justify the exercise then made of that privilege? Had the corporation no grounds for petition, or remonstrance in our calamities abroad, and our sufferings at home? Was the act of petitioning altogether impertinent and unprovoked by any of the late or passing events of the day? Whatever cause might be assigned for the seemingly unaccountable treatment the city of London had met with, he felt confident that it could not be attributed to any such motives. And, indeed, he could not help observing, with regret, that the present was by no means a solitary instance of encroachment upon the right of petition. In the whole course of his present Majesty's unfortunate reign, were to be found repeated instances of the same insulting indifference towards the exercise of this invaluable and indisputable privilege.—The next point to which he had to advert was, what appeared to him a violation of the usages of that House; it had been the custom to submit to the members of the House a copy of the King's Speech, at least one day before the meeting of Parliament; but on the late occasion, the great majority of the House were ignorant of the Speech till it was read from the chair.—Another circumstance which he had, by the way, to advert to, was, that when they broke up last session, they were in possession of the circumstances of that foul and scandalous job respecting Chelsea hospital. But what would the House now think, when they were told that, notwithstanding all his exertions to defeat that job, it had been recently concluded upon, and the grant made out? Did ministers suppose that this sort of precipitance was the way to stop all further inquiry? They would find themselves deceived if they thought so, for it was his intention to move at a future day for the revocation of the grant in question. He had left ministers a fair retreat, they had not taken the advantage of it, and he was determined to follow up what he had already attempted, in order to defeat that job.—He should now pass to

the more immediate consideration of the Speech itself. And, in the first place, he thought the Speech singularly defective; the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament ought to be a general exposition upon every prominent event and extensive operation that had occurred during the recess; and not a mere milk and water composition, full of unmeaning generals that could not be disputed, and the truth of which had neither importance nor application. It ought not to be that kind of composition, so cautiously modelled and shaped by the apprehensions of ministers, so as to slide harmless through discussion. The present Speech said nothing of the state of our affairs in India; and as to what it did say, there was a passage towards the conclusion of it, that he thought deserved more animadversion than it had yet met with; he meant that part that was tacked to the Speech, relating to a provision for the poorer order of clergy. He should be sorry to oppose any justifiable method of relieving the wants of that body of men, but never would he consent to do so by imposing additional exactions on a burthened and almost exhausted country. If the poor clergy were so indigent, they could not derive relief from a fitter source than the wealthy part of their own calling—the higher order of the established clergy were, in all conscience, rich enough to contribute to the necessities of the poorer class of their brotherhood; there could be no doubt that so opulent a body had the means to assist the individuals attached to it, and while they were so amply gifted with the means, it would be invidious to express a doubt, that men of their profession would be wanting in the inclination. To the rich clergy, therefore, he would leave their poorer brethren, or to whatever benefit might be drawn from an application to that purpose of queen Ann's bounty; in short he would agree to any plausible expedient for their relief, but never would hear of wringing from the hard hands of honest industry the last shilling for such an application.—With respect to the Expeditions, it could not be contended, that the *prima facie* result of our military operations was not disgrace. There was marked disgrace upon the face of the campaign; (to apply that term to the whole of our military operations) failure, total failure in Spain, and utter disgrace in Walcheren. He should not now enter



into the merits of the plan, or the question of the delay that had occurred in carrying that plan into effect; but it was well known that such either was our secrecy or our dispatch, that for three months before our expedition sailed, general Monnet's proclamation disclosed the object of that armament, and during that period counter-preparations were making by the enemy to oppose it. But there was one circumstance connected with this subject that appeared to him not a little extraordinary. He had read an order from a noble lord lately at the head of the war department (lord Castlereagh), directed to the captains and commanders in the fleet employed in the descent upon Walcheren, and requiring them to search their respective ships and vessels, and (when found) to send back to this country a person who was said to have sailed with the fleet; the person to whom he alluded was Mr. Finnelly, and it seemed that in order to comply with the directions of the noble lord, every minor consideration was thrown aside; the other objects of the grand expedition were suspended, and the British fleet put into active requisition for the purpose of facilitating the apprehension of Mr. Finnelly. He did not wish to be too curious in inquiring into the cause of this important part of the service; but as to its effects, it had transpired, that owing to the busy occupation that now engrossed the attention of the commanders, a transport containing the entrenching tools was left behind, and the want of those tools produced, it is said, he knew not with what truth, some delay in the construction of the works before Flushing. With respect to the other topics, the campaign in the Peninsula, our affairs in the East Indies, our dispute with America, he could not but assent to the substance of the objections that had been made, though he confessed that as to questions involving military topics he thought himself, and many of those who heard him, not the most competent judges; but he could judge of the change that had taken place in the prospects of the country since the year 1793. When the war that then broke out, founded as it was in folly and injustice, what terrible predictions did they then hear of the probable consequences, resulting from that ill-omened step? but how insignificant were those predictions, compared with the more terrible events that had since occurred?

Not even the prophetic despondency of that inauspicious period could have dared but imagine all the evils that have since afflicted and humbled us. Nor could he without pain and astonishment observe the too prevalent disposition even then, to cite and to bow down to the authority of a departed statesman, whom as a minister he looked upon as the greatest curse that ever visited this country. He, for his part, could not so soon, nor so easily unlearn the lessons, the terrible lessons, impressed upon his mind by the uniform tenor of Mr. Pitt's administration, and so strongly inculcated at one period by the severe but deserved animadversions of those gentlemen who had since learned to think of that minister with greater charity; but he could not yet endure to hear such a man panegyricized; for if he was fit to be panegyricized, he was fit to be imitated. He could not yet think it other than an insult, the burthening with his debts the people he had so reduced. He thought it a still greater insult to make that people pay for the erection of a monument to his memory. It was, indeed, unnecessary. He had left his monument behind him—'Exegit monumentum acre perennius.' A monument that would be as lasting as those ruins in Europe of which he was the founder; or, if there must be a monument in this his injured country, he (Sir Francis) would propose that a pillar should be reared in the adjoining square; that on the one side Magna Charta should appear in large and imposing characters, and on the other should appear, equally conspicuous, all the host of Mr. Pitt's acts in direct violation of the provisions, and in utter subversion of the principles of that great bulwark of our liberties. He should propose, also, that the Speaker should, on the initiation of every new minister, lead him up to the foot of that pillar, and thus make the name that ought not to be an example, what it ought—a warning to all who took upon them the charge of the future government of this country.—The hon. baronet next proceeded to observe upon the rigorous mode of collecting the taxes, which he alleged to be oppressive in the extreme, vexatious and harrassing; that there was no mode of redress, but by means that involved the injured parties in greater expence than the fraudulent exaction amounted to. He instanced cases where poor farmers were surcharged for dogs; the tax itself was 20s. ten of which went into

the informer's pocket, and in general the fraudulent surcharges went only to enrich the exactor without contributing a mite to the treasury. He next adverted to the Jubilee, which he denounced as a clumsy trick, to thrust joy down the throats of the people, and repeated his opinion, that all such evils were to be traced to a radical error in the system, and that no matter what changes took place while that remained unchanged. How happy would they be if they could place the country in the position in which it stood at any former period for the last fifteen years. How happy if it stood even in the same situation as after the much abused treaty of Amiens; in short, there was no preceding year for that space of time in which it did not stand better than in the succeeding. With respect to their military operations, he would put this simple question; if neither the generals nor the soldiers were to blame, why was their failure so great and general? Changes were imperceptibly taking place that were of an alarming nature; the country was set thick with barracks, and foreign mercenaries were introduced daily, without exciting comment or curiosity. The regiment of the Duke of Brunswick Oels, who, immediately before, were stigmatised in the general orders of the Archduke Charles, as unfit to be employed, or serve with soldiers, were brought here to defend Englishmen.—Englishmen wanted no such defence. He had to reprobate another monstrous innovation, hateful to the constitution, and destructive of our liberties, the practice of secret and solitary imprisonment. No power of despotism could invent what was more subduing to the mind of man, or odious to his feelings. Three warnings that he could state, would evince that there could be no apathy on such points; at present he would forbear going into the subject. The insult to the city of London did afford a rallying point to every county in the empire, to support the right of petitioning and stand up together against despotism. If the king was not to be made acquainted with any thing, but through the polluted medium of his ministers, then were they on the brink of destruction, and all that remained of their freedom, and of their constitution, was lost. He was not one of those who could attribute all the misfortune and calamities of this reign to the influence of a malignant star—no star was necessary; there was something wrong in themselves,

from which all these evils sprang. He could see in that room the root of all the evil. Here was the root; and the branches spread over, and extended to every extremity of the country. Under their shade flourished no useful plants, nothing but noxious weeds. The fruits upon the boughs were tempting to the eye, but to the taste they betrayed the bitterness of ashes. They knew the passage to which he alluded, and also knew what it was said ought to be done to the tree which was not good. Our corruption interfered with every branch of the state—it injured our navy, our army, our commerce—and ministers, at any price, must have a majority in parliament.—(Hear! hear!) He had read of a Roman, whose unremitting advice to the Senate was "Carthage must be destroyed;" so would he return ever to the same point, "This House must be reformed."

Mr. *Yorke* called upon the House to observe the remarkable words made use of by the hon. baronet. whenever he spoke of the House of Commons, the hon. baronet never condescended to call them the House of Commons, but in speaking of them, called them "this assembly," or "this room," or "this meeting." If by this, the hon. baronet meant to insinuate that they were not the legal and constitutional representatives of the people, he altogether dissented from any such monstrous doctrine, and gave it as his opinion, that the Reform recommended by the hon. baronet would only increase the danger it was designed to remedy. With respect to the Jubilee, he strongly reprobated the very improper terms made use of by the hon. baronet in his description of that memorable festival, where he spoke of it as forcing joy down the throats of the people; never, he contended for it, was the popular affection of joy so spontaneous, so sincere, and so universal: coupling this with the "malignant star," of which the hon. baronet spoke so eloquently, he wished to know if the reign of our beloved monarch, commencing in such an æra of national glory; and with the gift to his people of a noble and honourable peace, partook of any portion of that malignant influence so pathetically deplored by the hon. baronet? The hon. baronet had said a great deal of how happy we should be could we travel back to any one epoch of our past condition for the last fifteen years. He would go a little higher than the hon. baronet went, and say, that

happy would it have been for this country, for Europe, and the world, had they never witnessed the calamitous event of the execrable French Revolution. The hon. baronet had, with no inconsiderable eloquence, indulged himself in vehement invective against a late illustrious statesman, Mr. Pitt, and had made a whimsical proposal for the erection of a new monument to that great man's memory; to which it seemed the Speaker, with his mace, and attendants, were to pay a visit for the purpose of introducing every new minister to its presence. Of the merits of the plan he should say nothing, but he denied, in the name of the people of England, and in the presence of those whom he thought their legal representatives, that they had repined at paying the debts, or reluctantly contributed to erect a monument to the memory of that great and justly lamented statesman. Mr. Fox himself, his great political antagonist, had not opposed the payment of his debts. In fact, there were many of the assertions of the hon. baronet that required only to be restated, in order to be refuted.—With respect to the city of London, the hon. baronet had first presumed the fact of insult, and then argued upon it; but the city of London had suffered no insult. He respected that loyal corporation as highly as the hon. baronet could do, and never would forget the glorious part they acted in establishing the present family upon the throne. The city of London he knew was, as it were, the heart of the kingdom, giving blood and spirit to the rest of the country. Far be it from him to wish to circumscribe its privileges; but there was no attempt of the kind in the case alluded to. The corporation, properly so called, had privileges, which, perhaps, did not extend to the corporation as comprehending the livery. The latter, perhaps, could not claim the audience upon the throne, to which the former was entitled, but how was the right of petition questioned or invaded? Was it refused to be received? Was not the question merely as to the form of presenting? and was there to be no allowance made for the advanced years, and peculiar personal infirmities of the King, that must make retirement so desirable, and all unnecessary publicity of transacting business so irksome? He was glad to hear the hon. baronet give the assembly, as he called it, such an instance of the dangerous state of our liberties and rights, when the King of one of the first

powers in the world could not 'turn aside' a little foot-path in his own demesne.' The country was said to be in great danger. He thought it was; and that the danger was much nearer home than was generally imagined: it was in our intestine divisions, and that party animosity that made us hate one another more than the common enemy, and in the exaggerated manner in which every thing was taken against the fortunes of the country, and in favour of those of our enemies, industriously circulated as they had been by those who were enemies to our constitution, both in church and state.—With respect to the present administration, he regretted the differences that had occurred as much as any man; but denied that they were imputable to his right hon. friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had done what he could to give it efficiency and vigour; and when his efforts failed, with a constancy and courage worthy his pure and honourable mind, had taken the resolution of standing by his sovereign. He (Mr. Yorke) would support his Majesty's administration—he meant that he would never enter into systematic opposition against it. He approved of the Address because it did not pledge the House to any thing: he thought that part of the Walcheren Expedition that succeeded, very much undervalued, and put the case of a French fleet entering the Thames, and landing their forces on the island of Sheppy, and taking Sheerness, and though not able to come up to Chatham and destroy it, yet, after blowing up the docks and works at Sheerness, retiring to Sheppy, keeping possession of it four months, and then retiring unmolested; their rear untouched; the enemy not daring to look them once in the face; would this be thought nothing of, or would it be thought disgrace? The capture of Flushing was an important service: 10,000 men fell into our hands prisoners of war; the basin that was destroyed held at low water 22 feet of water, and was capable of holding 15 or 20 sail of the line; the Scheldt was not navigable four months in the year, and the French fleet had begun already to feel the want of their basin. He repeated, then, that the capture of Flushing was an important service. The hon. general (Tarleton) turned up his eyes. He lamented to see in his hon. friend such a disposition on this, and other occasions, to withhold that defence from brother officers in their

absence, which it would so well become a brother officer to make. He then adverted to the advance of lord Wellington to Talavera, and thought there was no part of that illustrious officer's proceedings that was not worthy of his exalted reputation. If there was any thing that might admit of the nicer investigation of military criticism (to which, he agreed with the hon. baronet, so few in that House could have any just pretensions), yet, if there were any, he would select two points; one was, the seemingly too great reliance placed by that gallant officer on the Spaniards; and the other was, his not having secured the pass of Banos, which sir Robert Wilson had so gallantly defended against a superior force for 9 hours. These were the only points upon which he thought there could be any doubt.

Sir John Sebright thought the present ministers incapable of serving the country efficiently at this awful crisis. He was not fond of systematic opposition. He respected the right hon. gent. at the head of the government; gave him full credit for his integrity, but that was not enough; gave him credit for his talents also, but did not think they were of the kind that were at present wanting at the head of an administration. He did not blame that right hon. gent. for the dissensions that lately occurred in the cabinet; but if there had been an efficient head, there would have been no such dissensions. When a regiment was in mutiny, the commanding officer was responsible.—With respect to the Walcheren Expedition, he could not see the necessity of waiting for the production of papers before they gave their opinion upon it.—What could those papers contain? Could ministers shew him a new map of Europe? Unless they could, and one essentially different from all that he had ever consulted, he never could be brought to approve of an Expedition up the Scheldt.—All the mischief that had been done at Flushing might, perhaps, be repaired in a month.—As to the glorious victory of Talavera, as it had been called, there was a glory of the soldier, and a glory of the general. The glory of the soldier was patience under privation and fatigue—discipline and courage. This glory had, indeed, been displayed in all its lustre at Talavera; but although he admired the talents of lord Wellington, he did not think that he had acted, in the advance into Spain, the part of a wise general. Before

he advanced he ought to have ascertained what was the strength of his ally and what the position of the enemy. He beat the French; but then he was compelled to retreat, as if he had been beaten. Barren laurels indeed! Why, this was the essence of laurel—laurel water, which was a poison.—The hon. baronet then adverted to the disgraceful manner in which the high offices of the state had been bandied about. He likewise pointedly adverted to the abuse of the term loyalty. He allowed the right hon. gent. (Mr. Perceval) loyalty, and he considered loyalty as a very high virtue; but he could not allow the right hon. gent. to be the sole possessor of loyalty. He contended that nothing could be more injurious to his Majesty, than the manner in which the word loyalty had on many occasions been prostituted. No one had a right to identify himself and his party with the King. It was equally injurious to the King, and inconsistent with the constitution. The hon. baronet then strongly pressed the necessity of removing the present ministry, which he declared he did without the smallest interested motive; for every one knew that he was of no party, and would willingly have supported the ministers if they had been such as the present times required. He then recommended a rigid attention to economy; which, though it might give but little relief from the pressure of taxation, would at least induce the people to bear their unavoidable burdens with more patience. He also expressed his regret, that the hon. baronet (sir F. Burdett) had disturbed the ashes of a late great minister. He firmly believed it was to him that he owed his being there, and that he had an acre of ground of his own on which he could set his foot. He concluded by again urging the necessity of removal and inquiry; and said, that these were the sentiments, if not of an able, at least of an honest man.

General Tarleton, advertent to the Walcheren Expedition, observed, that there was not a sufficient number of craft to bring the necessary number of troops at once against the enemy. This demanded inquiry. The damage done to Flushing, he said, might be repaired in a short time. He explained, that the reasons why he had on a former night, made some observations on the conduct of the officer commanding our army in Spain, were these—First, because ministers had declared that the advance to Spain was

purely his own act, done in the exercise of his discretion; Secondly, because, in these cases, he perceived in ministers a disposition uniformly to refuse inquiry. He appealed to the House, whether, when the merit of an officer had passed the ordeal of examination, there ever was a more generous public than that of this country, or more disposed to do its officers full justice? As a proof of this, he desired gentlemen to look at the cases of Marlborough, &c. &c. The merit of lord Wellington was still equivocal. He asked why, in cases of failure, the merits of the officer should not be inquired into as a matter of course, as was, in a great measure, the plan in the navy? He had blamed lord Wellington, when present in that House, for the convention of Cintra—for to him it was almost entirely to be attributed. He now blamed him for his rash advance into Spain. He might have known that it was first necessary to secure the supplies. From the days of Homer till now, armies could not march and fight without eating. He should think that he had not done his duty if he had not stated these opinions. He admitted that the army had gained great glory at Talavera. Never was there a greater display of intrepidity, fortitude, patience, and every thing which constituted the excellence of an army. But the conduct of the general was a totally distinct consideration, and that alone he blamed.

The Report was then brought up and read.

Mr. *Whitbread* observed, that he wished to introduce an Amendment in one part of the Address, and to that part he would confine what he had to say. He had on a former occasion observed, that there was in the Address no pledge on the part of the House to turn its attention to an economical reform. When taxes were collected almost to as great an amount, as the people could bear; when such large sums had been prodigally wasted in the course of the last summer; when the right hon. gent. had joined with him persons whose views of economy were so different from those generally entertained; he particularly alluded to a Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Wharton), who had been Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, and a member of the Finance Committee, in which he had evinced sentiments materially different from the Chairman, and was in a great measure the cause of the slow progress of that Committee. Under all these circumstances,

he thought that a pledge of this nature was requisite. Mr. *Whitbread* also noticed the modesty of the hon. gent. (Mr. Wharton), who, on a former night had expressed his hope that he would be able to learn to do his duty. But the misfortune was, that it was of the last importance that some one should have been placed in that situation who had learnt to do his duty before. The Amendment which he had to propose would be gratifying to a people, who, with a patience unexampled in any history, had submitted to a grinding system of taxation, at variance with the spirit of the constitution in which they had been accustomed to live. He had worded it in such a way, that he thought there could be no reasonable objection to it from any quarter. He concluded by reading his Amendment, the substance of which was, "That in justice to the people, the House would, at the earliest opportunity, diligently apply itself to the effecting of such economical reform as might be consistent with the welfare of the state; such as might be satisfactory to the feelings of the people, and, in some measure, prove an alleviation of their burthens."

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* did not see the least occasion for this Amendment, his Majesty having promised that the Estimates for the current year should be prepared with the utmost attention to economy. The proposed Amendment would only serve to mark a suspicion of this promise, and to raise expectations in the people which could not be gratified. He then objected to the language in which the hon. gent. spoke of the pressure of the taxes on the people—a language which, in his opinion, could answer no good purpose whatever. He rather thought the Amendment alluded to those measures of economy which were under discussion last summer; and, as he knew that an hon. gent. (Mr. Martin,) intended to bring forward his Resolutions again, he saw no reason for the proposed pledge.

Mr. *Ponsonby* supported the Amendment, upon the ground that the Estimates related to the war expenditure solely, while the Address related to measures of economy, proper at all times, but particularly so at a time when the war expenditure was so large. As to raising unreasonable expectations, the Amendment carefully avoided this by the introduction of the words, "as far as was consistent with the welfare of the state."

Mr. *Bathurst* thought the paragraph unnecessary, as matters connected with the public economy were confided to the Finance Committee. His chief object in rising was to notice a statement made by an hon. baronet (Sir F. Burdett) respecting a noble relation of his. He understood the hon. baronet to state, that his relation (lord Sidmouth) received a peerage for having commenced the war; but he was misinformed as to the fact, for it was notorious he did not receive the peerage then, but afterwards, on coming into administration with Mr. Pitt; and then he was induced to accept of it from circumstances independent of personal gratification. He begged also to state, that his noble relation, on retiring from office, declined a title higher than what he afterwards received, and also refused any pecuniary reward or gratification which was then offered to him.

Sir F. Burdett said in explanation, that he only meant to express his opinion generally, that the honour was ill bestowed, that the noble lord had done nothing to deserve it, and that he was still to learn what were his merits.

Earl Temple thought it important that the House should shew a disposition to probe and examine into every abuse; for otherwise the people would be apt to think that abuses were greater than they were. He should therefore support the motion.

Mr. Wharton hoped for the indulgence of the House in replying to some allusions which had been made to him. He had not admitted on a former night that he was ignorant of the duties of the office which he had the honour to fill; but, if he was ignorant, he would not come to the hon. gent. for instruction. He came into office under great disadvantage, after it had been filled by the hon. gent. who lately left it; but he flattered himself, that from the knowledge which he had previously acquired of Finance, as Chairman of Ways and Means, and a Member of the Finance Committee, and by unremitting industry, the prophecy of the hon. gent. as to the detriment which the public service would sustain, would fail to be realised. As to retarding the Report of the Finance Committee, he thought he had done a public service, by procuring papers to be expunged from it, which, had they gone forth, would have had a most detrimental effect to the country. He believed it was the first time it had ever

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been adduced as evidence against a man's capacity for a seat at the Treasury, that he had once been on a Committee of Finance, and had once been the Chairman of a Committee of Ways and Means.

Mr. John Smith contended, that the general sentiment of the country was, that government had been guilty of a shameful want of economy, more particularly in the military department. He would vote for the Amendment, because it pledged the House to an inquiry on the subject.

Sir A. Pigot also supported the Amendment, which pledged the House to enforce only such retrenchments as were consistent with the welfare of the country. What confidence could Parliament place in the assurance of ministers, that the estimates for the present year should be framed with a strict regard to economy, when they opposed an inquiry into the profuse expenditure of the year that was past?

The gallery was then cleared for a division. The numbers were, for the Amendment 54; against it 95; Majority 41.

[FOREIGN TROOPS.] Earl Temple, adverting to the circumstance of the reception into British pay of a number of Foreign Troops that had arrived in this country under the command of the duke of Brunswick Oels, wished to know if it was the intention of ministers to advise his Majesty to make any communication to the House on the subject?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer replied in the negative; unless, indeed, he might receive his Majesty's commands to make some communication relative to the gallant leader of these troops. Such a communication as that alluded to by the noble lord was unnecessary; for it was perfectly consistent with the existing laws that a certain number of Foreign Troops should be in British pay, and that number had not been exceeded by the accession of the Troops under the duke of Brunswick. If, however, it had been exceeded, under the peculiar circumstances in which those brave soldiers arrived, such a step would, in his opinion, have been completely justifiable; although in that case he should certainly have thought it his duty to advise a communication to Parliament on the subject.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, January 26.

[BATTLE OF TALAVERA.—VOTE OF THANKS TO LORD WELLINGTON.] The order of the day being read,

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The Earl of Liverpool rose, and addressed the House, to the following purport:—My Lords; In pursuance of the notice I gave, I now rise for the purpose of moving, That the Thanks of this House be given to lord viscount Wellington, the officers and the army under his command, for the skill and ability, the valour and bravery by which they obtained a victory over the enemy at Talavera. When, my lords, I first proposed to bring this question under your consideration, I fully expected that it would have met with unanimous approbation; but since I have been led to believe, from what has fallen from noble lords opposite, that this motion of thanks will encounter some degree of opposition, I never, in the whole course of my life, felt more interested in any question both on private and on public grounds. I have in framing my motion on this occasion pursued the usual course, and with a view to conciliation, have separated the conduct of the army, and the officer commanding, from every other subject connected with the general management of the campaign. It has been my care to propose the vote of your lordships thanks in that shape which, if possible, could have no disputable point of objection, and therefore it is that it is confined simply to the battle of Talavera. Whatever opinion may be entertained respecting the measures which led to the battle itself, or the consequences that ensued, there can be, I am persuaded, but one sentiment as to the skill of the general and the valour of the army that fought and defeated the French at Talavera. I believe that on any former occasions, it was never deemed necessary to blend the other circumstances of any campaign with the consideration of the valour of the troops displayed in a particular action.—The instance alluded to last night by my noble friend (Harrowby) when your lordships were called upon to confer a vote of thanks upon sir John Stuart and the army under his command, for the glorious victory gained at Maida, must be well remembered. It must be in your lordships' recollection, that when a noble baron, in this house, and another of his Majesty's ministers, in another place, moved a similar tribute of approbation of their conduct, whatever difference of sentiment might exist, as to the measures which led to that event, such was the brilliancy of the act itself, such was the glory gained by British intrepidity and valour on the occasion, that without investigating other measures

connected with it, not only did his Majesty's present servants, but the whole House, agree to the motion, unanimously.—My lords; different sentiments might be entertained on the propriety and policy of that descent upon Calabria. On that occasion it was deemed expedient, by those who directed the operations of the campaign, to make that attempt, for the purpose of accomplishing two objects—one as a diversion against the enemy, and to assist the Calabrians then in a state of insurrection; the other, to relieve the Mole di Gaeta, a fortress on the coast, at the time besieged by the French. Although that army failed in the latter object, and succeeded but partially in the first, yet no one suggested that the general had not done his duty, no one denied that the whole, both the general and the army, were entitled to the gratitude of their country, and the thanks of Parliament. Still, in that case, it might have been said, whatever may be your lordship's opinion of the present, that the consequences which ensued were not beneficial to the country, and that the measures which preceded it were not founded in any principle of sound policy. The Thanks of both houses were nevertheless given to sir John Stuart, and the army, for the eminent skill and valour displayed in that battle, and the splendid victory obtained. I come now my lords, to the merit of that action which terminated in the glorious victory of Talavera, and I most readily admit, if your lordships were called upon to decide upon all the circumstances of that campaign, that it might materially alter the question; but I wish to direct your attention solely to the conduct of the officer, and the army under his command, on the 27th and 28th of July. We ought to consider the state of the army before and at the time of the engagement; for if every measure was pursued on that occasion, which could reflect honour on the prudence and valour of the general, not any events which afterwards occurred should derogate from his merit in that memorable engagement. The march of lord Wellington into the interior of Spain, was not, as some may term it, a rash undertaking; on the contrary, it was well considered, wisely planned, and deliberately executed. No greater prudence could be manifested than the choice of the admirable position at Talavera, as it was afterwards described by the French generals. Need I remind your lordships

of all the circumstances by which this victory was attended: It had been determined on the part of the enemy to make a concentrated attack upon the combined armies. The British force afterwards engaged, did not altogether amount to more than 20,000 men; and although the Spanish army was present, and partially took a part in the battle, yet it was evident, not only from lord Wellington's dispatches, but from the accounts of the enemy, that the brunt of the attack was principally, if not wholly, borne by the English. Thus, my lords, the French army, amounting to almost 50,000 men, commenced their desperate attack upon the British line, and were repulsed. They renewed it, and were repulsed again; and though they frequently renewed and repeated their attempts, they were defeated—signally defeated in every instance. Although, as I have said, the Spanish army was present, the French directed all their efforts against our troops. This was peculiarly evident in their attack upon the strongest part of our position where major-general Hill commanded, against which they directed the great bulk of their force, and where all their attempts were eventually but gloriously frustrated by the irresistible valour of British troops. In a similar manner an attack was directed against other parts of the line, and universally failed; the enemy were routed with the loss of nearly 10,000 men, and obliged to retire from the scene of action and seek security in flight. Could any action be more decisive? Could any be more glorious to the British arms, when you take into consideration the inequality of numbers? This victory, my lords, was attended with unerring proofs of its brilliant and decisive nature. Twenty pieces of artillery and four standards were the trophies of the triumph of the British general and army. In whatever light it can be viewed this action must be considered eminently intitled to the thanks of your lordships, and the gratitude of the nation. It arrested the progress of the enemy; it was remarkable for the military skill displayed in it throughout; it was maintained in a manner no less conspicuous for tactical arrangement, than for the characteristic energy of the general and the pre-eminent valour of the troops; and being achieved against such an immense disparity of numbers, shed a new lustre upon the long established reputation of British soldiers. Though the army was afterwards, by the

same policy that led to its advance directed to retreat, that retreat was not owing to any want of skill or foresight. When the French army was reinforced by another body of 30,000 men, who, from other quarters, had been marched to their aid, it was prudent, on the part of lord Wellington, to retreat, and reserve his strength for a more favourable opportunity of making a successful struggle in the cause of Spanish liberty. For, certainly, my lords, a brilliant success may be gained over an enemy, and motives of military prudence may afterwards direct a retreat, if that enemy be strongly reinforced. It cannot with any fairness be for a moment contended, that when in a contest between two bodies of men or two individuals, a great and splendid triumph has been gained on the one side, the arrival of a fresh force on the other is to be considered as destroying the merit or rendering doubtful the victory which had been previously acquired. I am ready to allow that a proposal of this nature is one of the greatest importance; but when such a motion is submitted to the consideration of Parliament, it ought to be considered on the other hand that any light objection to it may be attended with serious results.—My lords; I would impress upon your minds, that it is of the last importance that such victories as that of Talavera should be rewarded by every tribute of honour and praise this House can bestow. If we refuse to reward the valiant deeds of our army, by every approbation we can bestow, we take from them every incitement to valour; we deprive them of those laurels which constitute the soldier's honour and his fame; which he thirsts after, not only for himself, but, because he knows they will be handed down with derivative value to his descendants. It is for this that he devotes his life to his country's good; and if you refuse such a tribute to the transcendent merits of the survivors and the glorious memory of the slain, you will act unjustly to the army, and disrespectfully to the devotion of those who are dead. In the existing state of the continent of Europe, it becomes us more especially to consider the interest, to animate the courage, and to reward the services, of our army. France was, under the old government, a great military power; but we see her a still more formidable one in the present day. Under the monarchy, not only the military, but every other



profession, was eminently encouraged; but the revolution, which has changed other establishments, has altered the whole system of old France, and sacrificed every thing to the interest of the army. The profession of the law has been destroyed; that of the church has been overturned; commerce and trade are little attended to; and nothing is countenanced with honour or respect, except the profession of arms. No stronger inducement than the consideration of the effects of such a system can influence your lordships to unanimity. When the enemy endeavours to traduce our national character in every other instance, this is the theme of his ostensible invective, and his real praise. We know he has pronounced us a nation of shopkeepers. It has been the good fortune of Great Britain to unite a military spirit with our commercial pursuits, and every encouragement is due still further to promote this spirit. No achievement was ever more entitled to praise than the victory at Talavera. It was so considered by the government of Spain—as a victory of the last importance to the safety of their country—and they conferred the highest honours on lord Wellington; honours so great, that they will be found to have been but seldom bestowed for any services. Now, I will ask, did his Majesty, in his General Orders, denominate the battle of Talavera?—[His lordship here read the General Orders, wherein it was stated that the French were completely defeated]—His Majesty, in those General Orders, which might be certainly considered as proceeding from the advice of his ministers—

Earl Grey rose to order. He considered any mention of his Majesty's sentiments, in the course of a debate, as irregular, and inconsistent with the privileges of the House.

The Earl of *Liverpool* continued—My lords, I did not mention the opinion of his Majesty, in any manner, but as the advised opinion of his ministers for which they are responsible; and in that I conceive I am justified, according to the usage of this House. I will again ask your lordships, how the victory of Talavera was estimated by our allies? Why, universally, they considered it one of the greatest magnitude in itself and of the most advantageous nature in its consequences. It filled the breasts of the people of Spain with general admiration. It will never do, my lords, to judge of mili-

tary prowess, by all the rules of special pleading. I wish to press upon your attention the importance of an unanimous vote, as it will inspire your armies with a love of glory, and secure the strength of the country. The noble earl concluded by moving "That this House do return their Thanks to general lord visc. Wellington for the skill and ability displayed by him in the battles on the 27th and 28th of July 1809, at Talavera."

The Earl of *Suffolk* said, as a professional man, that it was with pain to his feelings he rose to state those objections which irresistibly impelled him to express his opposition to the motion of thanks to lord Wellington. On all occasions, he was sure that the British army would discharge their duty, and, in every emergency, exhibit proofs of unquestionable valour; but he could not, as a military man, allow that the noble general had acted prudently, in having brought himself into such a situation, as that in which the battle was fought, without his having the power to decline it. The noble earl had alluded to the battle of Maida—but that brilliant action was not to be compared with the contest at Talavera. It was decisive in its issue, and did not come under their lordships consideration, in a questionable shape, like the victory of Talavera. He could not denominate that a victory, where a retreat immediately followed, and the wounded and the prisoners fell into the hands of the enemy. The noble earl had dwelt, with much stress, upon the artillery taken on the spot—but the capture of artillery was not to be considered at all times as a signal of victory. It might have been convenient for the enemy to leave them on the field. As to the reinforcement of 36,000 men, which was advancing to support the French, why did not lord Wellington know of their situation, and the probability of their approach? It was the duty of every general to have such information. He thought, when considering the amount of the British force in the Peninsula, and that only so small a portion of it was brought into action at Talavera, there was ground for reprehension; and this conduct appeared perfectly conformable to the manner whereby the same general brought only half of his forces to act against the enemy at the battle of Vimeira. He had listened with attention to the observations of the noble earl, respecting the situation of the country, and he would only ask, how came it that we were so si-

tuated? Why, the chief cause was the same with that which produced the disastrous consequences of our expeditions to Spain. It might be recollected that he had given his opinion, in a former session, that the most judicious disposal of our military force, in aid of Spain, would be to send them by ten or twenty thousand together, on board our fleets, for the purpose of being landed at any point where they might best conduce to the assistance of Spain and our Allies. It was his decided opinion that by such a mode of warfare, we might have relieved Gerona, which had withstood so long and glorious a siege. In addressing these observations to their lordships, he had explained his reasons for not acquiescing in the motion as to the noble general; but, as to the army, it should meet with his entire approbation.

Earl Grosvenor was induced from considerations of duty, to rise on this occasion, and with whatever regret to state those reasons which led him to oppose this motion of thanks to lord Wellington. In the first place, he was apprehensive that if the House were to be called upon to vote thanks for every instance of the display of valour, the proceeding would draw after it injurious results. The consequence would be, that if a single division exhibited proofs of determined bravery, their lordships would be called upon to vote away thanks, which was the highest honour they could bestow. Nay, the principle might be extended, and then the bravery of a single detachment, or an individual act of valour, would expect this high tribute of commendation. Whenever consequences no way beneficial, still more injurious, resulted to the country, from any operation of an army, whatever admiration might attach itself to the conduct of that army during such operation, he did not perceive the propriety of their being publicly thanked by the Parliament. The battle of Corunna, and the vote of thanks on that occasion, had been quoted as justifying a similar proceeding respecting Talavera; but, in his opinion, the former was not, on account of its consequences, entitled to that distinction, though certainly preferable to one under consideration. He wished to know from ministers whether or not, supposing the lamented sir John Moore had returned to this country after the battle of Corunna, they would have proposed a similar vote of thanks, passing over the, on his part, unblamable failure of success that occasioned that battle to be fought

there? He had in a general view an objection to the grant of peerages, as the reward of naval or military successes, and therefore, felt disposed to take this opportunity of commenting upon the other honours, which, in so conspicuous a manner, had been conferred upon the noble general. He supposed this vote of thanks would be followed, by another proceeding for granting a pecuniary remuneration. Their lordships would reflect upon the impolicy of granting titles of nobility to men whose fortunes were not adequate to support the dignity. It was of importance to the country that the peerage should not be so bestowed, because though no bad consequence may follow while the titled individual lived, the defect of fortune was likely to render his successors dependents on the crown. Perhaps it would better promote the ends of military fame and reputation, if an institution were established, from whence might be granted different orders of military merit. It would excite the same spirit of valour, without producing any of those inconveniences to the constitution, which resulted from the conferring of titles of nobility. Having adverted to this subject, as connected with the constitution, he was ready to allow that such heroes as the great Marlborough and Nelson, were entitled to the highest honours and estates, which had been granted to them and their successors. The battle of Talavera was one which, in all its circumstances did not appear to him entitled to such rewards; and therefore he considered it proper to address these sentiments to the House, as an explanation why he could not concur in the motion now submitted to their consideration.

Viscount Mountjoy expressed his wish to offer a few remarks upon the question proposed for their lordships decision. He was not possessed of those talents, and that experience, which belonged to the noble lord opposite (earl Grey) who appeared to be attending to every thing he might urge, and was preparing to answer every argument. Still, however inferior he might consider himself to the noble earl, in other respects, he could not reconcile it to his feelings or his duty not to communicate his sentiments on this occasion to the House. Looking at the conduct of the noble general, in his march from Portugal to the battle of Talavera; looking to the decided victory obtained there; and then contemplating the circumstances of his able retreat, he felt

bound to say, that, in his opinion no general ever deserved more honour or reward.—What would the noble lords opposite have said, if he had remained inactive in Portugal, and not marched into the interior of Spain? What would have been their outcry, if such had been his conduct? Why, then it would have been said, there was no necessity for his remaining in Portugal: we were in possession of Portugal. What benefit could result to the Spanish cause, if he had remained inactive on the frontiers of Spain?—But lord Wellington had done all which prudence could suggest, and valour carry into execution. He took a position at Talavera which reflected lustre on his talents; and, though his army was harassed, fatigued, and had undergone the utmost privations, it was in that state they were opposed to the French army, luxuriously supplied with every comfort which French commissariats could furnish, and one of the most splendid victories which was ever recorded, was gained by the skill and ability of the general and the steady discipline and determined valour of the British army almost unassisted. For this they were entitled to the gratitude, applause and affection of their country, and the unanimous thanks of that House. It was a victory so redundant with glory, that if any errors were in the way, they ought to be overshadowed by the laurels which had been acquired there. He wished to say a few words on the retreat of lord Wellington, which was only resorted to for the purpose of refreshing his troops. The sick and wounded, about whom so much had been alleged, were left; but how were they left? Sir Arthur Wellesley left in the care of the Spanish army those sick and disabled soldiers, whose wounds and mutilated bodies were so many bleeding mementoes of their glorious struggles for the triumph of the Spanish cause, over their perfidious invaders; he left them with general Cuesta, who occupied a position sufficiently strong to be maintained against the enemy and to afford the British army another opportunity of signalizing their valour, and assisting the Spaniards in the redemption of their liberty. While the wounds of our soldiers were still bleeding in the cause of Spain, after the glorious struggle they had made against the enemy, the conduct of general Cuesta prevented the noble lord from taking the advantage of his situation. No general was better skilled in war, none more enlightened, none more valiant than

lord viscount Wellington. The victory of Talavera was as brilliant and glorious as any upon record, and consequently intitled to the unanimous approbation of their lordships and the eternal gratitude of Spain and of this country.

Earl Grey having been so particularly alluded to by the noble lord, who had just sat down, begged leave to trouble their lordships with a few observations upon the question then under their consideration. The noble lord had alluded to what he had said on a former evening; namely, that it was doubtful, whether the battle of Talavera was a victory or not; he must again repeat that doubt, for he had yet to learn that it was a victory; still more, that it was a splendid and decisive victory as described by the noble lord. He could not discover any circumstances in its nature or results, which entitled it to the character of a victory, much less to that of a splendid and decisive victory; and under this impression, however painful the duty, and however much he might regret it, still he felt it to be his duty to resist the conferring of that high reward, the thanks of that House, which it was now sought to bestow. The noble earl (Liverpool) had indulged in a vein of declamation, upon the propriety and the expediency of conferring rewards upon military merit. He was, certainly, ready to agree with the noble earl in the propriety of bestowing rewards, where rewards were deserved, and of conferring the high honour of the thanks of that House upon transcendent merit; but he could not agree that the battle of Talavera was an event that ought to be characterized in such a way or remunerated by that superior distinction. Before, however, he should go into the discussion of the subject immediately before the House, he would beg leave to say a few words relative to the instance of the victory of Maida, for which the noble earl had stated, that the thanks of that House had been given, although the objects of the expedition of Sir John Stuart, had completely failed. He (lord Grey) was not aware that the objects of that expedition had completely failed, as stated by the noble earl. If they did fail, the failure was remote. It would be recollected that a French force was at that period assembled on the Neapolitan coast for the purpose of making a descent on Sicily. To destroy this force was the object of the expedition of sir John Stuart, and in that object he

completely succeeded in the battle of Maida, and the consequences that resulted from it. The enemy did not after that action retire in regular order, nor take up a position within sight of the field of battle, but were completely dispersed and annihilated as an army. Here then was a clear ground for the thanks of the House, a decisive victory having been gained, and the object sought in fighting the battle having been by that victory most fully attained. But when noble lords talked of a decisive victory having been gained at Talavera, it was incumbent upon them to shew that some of those results by which the character of a victory was distinguished, had taken place. To prove that a victory had been obtained, it was surely necessary to shew, either, that the object contended for had been gained, that the enemy's army had been dispersed, that prisoners had been taken, or that some decisive advantage, with a view to the general object of the campaign, had been achieved. The noble earl (Liverpool) had stated the taking of artillery to be a sure criterion of victory, but this was at best a doubtful point. How these twenty pieces of artillery were taken, did not by any means clearly appear, but surely the taking of prisoners would have been a much more decisive criterion of victory; but instead of our taking prisoners it appeared that prisoners were taken by the enemy. So far from the battle of Talavera, therefore having the character of a victory, it had neither succeeded in attaining the general object of the campaign, nor the immediate object, namely, that of dispersing the enemy's army.—The general object of the advance of lord Wellington into Spain, he took to be that of driving before him the enemy's troops, and obtaining possession of the capital of Madrid. The French troops in Spain at that time occupied a defensive line of positions from Toledo to Salamanca. On the advance of lord Wellington into Spain, the enemy left their positions, for the purpose of concentrating their troops, and preventing him from advancing. Lord Wellington having marched to Talavera, and being there destitute of the means of transport and of provisions, was obliged to stop, the battle was fought, and the enemy were for the moment repulsed; but the general object of the advance into Spain was lost, the enemy retained possession of the capital, and the British troops were obliged to retreat. The im-

mediate object of the battle was not gained; for what was the result?—The enemy retired in good order, and took up a position in sight of the field of battle, where our army did not venture to attack them. In two days afterwards the British army was obliged to retreat, leaving to the care of the enemy their sick and wounded. The noble earl had said, that this was in consequence of the advance of another part of the French troops, which threatened the flank and rear of our army. That Lord Wellington had no intelligence of the advance of this body of French troops, until the 31st of July, did not speak much in behalf of his conduct as a general. Not only, however, the battle of Talavera could not be considered as a victory, but its results were absolutely disastrous. By his retreat, lord Wellington left uncovered the Spanish army, under Vanegas, which was in consequence afterwards defeated by the French: he left Sir Robert Wilson, exposed also at Escalona, and his troops were, in consequence, totally defeated by the French. Sir Rt. Wilson, whom lord Wellington, in a subsequent dispatch, praised as an "active partizan," had certainly shewn great ability and extensive military talents, in collecting and organizing a force out of materials not the best adapted for the purpose. If then, it was proved, that by the battle of Talavera the enemy were merely for the moment repulsed, but not defeated, and that the most disastrous consequences resulted from that battle to our ally, as well as with respect to the general object of the campaign, surely it could not be pretended that a victory was gained, or that the high honour of the thanks of that House ought to be conferred for merely repulsing an enemy.—It had been said, that lord Wellington had displayed great skill in the dispositions he made during the battle. He confessed he could not agree in that opinion. He thought that the position on the left had not been sufficiently secured, or taken advantage of; and he doubted much whether the charge of cavalry was judicious, it having been attended with great loss, without producing any adequate advantage. He could not help thinking, that there was much also to blame in the conduct of lord Wellington with respect to the Spanish troops, though certainly the dispatch of the Spanish general gave a very different account of the conduct of those troops to that given in the dispatch of lord Wellington. But if

lord Wellington believed the Spanish troops to be of such a description that they could not be trusted to meet the enemy, why did he place the British army in a situation of such imminent peril at Talavera? If lord Wellington held such an opinion of the Spanish troops, nothing could justify him in giving the Spanish General the option either of defending the passes against the advance of the French army under the duke of Dalmatia, which threatened the flank and rear of the British, or of taking care of our sick and wounded at Talavera. If he thought the Spaniards incapable of effectually combating the enemy, nothing could justify him in giving such an option, by which, if the Spanish general had accepted the former, part of the alternative, the British army might have been placed in a situation of most imminent peril. Why also had not lord Wellington better information with respect to the state of the defence of the passes? Why did he trust to the intelligence he received from the Spaniards, neglecting even the ordinary precaution of sending an officer of his own, to ascertain whether the passes were properly defended?—Unfortunately the disasters to which he had alluded, and which immediately followed the battle of Talavera, were not all that resulted from that measure. The British army was compelled to retreat into Portugal, where he was afraid, it was now in a very critical situation, and where, from the unhealthiness of the position it occupied, disease had made such alarming progress amongst the troops, that he believed their number did not now exceed 9,000 effective men.—The noble lord had very eloquently and truly depicted the suffering state of our army at the time they fought the battle of Talavera. It certainly demanded a very serious inquiry how it happened that the British troops were destitute of almost every comfort, and almost without provisions, whilst the French army was amply supplied.—It was a most singular thing that we, in a friendly country, which we went to defend, should be so ill supplied—should be almost starved in fact: while the French, the enemies and invaders of that country, should be well supplied and well fed. It had been said by a great authority, that the least merit of a great general consisted in fighting a battle. In judicious marches, in combined and well-timed movements, in coming to action

only when all circumstances were most favourable for him, lay the perfection of a general's skill. If we looked to Austerlitz and other great battles, we should find that the French armies seized their enemies' magazines, and were better provided for in hostile countries than the armies of those countries themselves. Must there not have been in our case a great want of foresight and arrangement for the provisioning of our army, upon our making the attempt we did, in the heart of Spain? He had heard from those who had since been through that part of the country, that after the French had been twice there, there were still sufficient means of provision. The French, in fact, sent out a number of small parties, who collected provisions and kept the peasantry quiet, and we took no means to counteract the operations of those parties. This did not evince much merit on our part.—No more painful task could fall upon him than to object to thanks in a case where great and indisputable bravery had been shewn by our gallant army: he wished not to withhold the rewards of parliament but to make them greater, and raise their value higher, by dealing them out sparingly, and appropriating them solely to those great occasions that incontestibly demand them. He thought that at Talavera what we did, with all that could be said or thought in praise of it, could not be magnified into what was truly and justly to be described a victory.—The noble earl (Liverpool) had read the General Orders issued by his Majesty, relative to the victory stated to have been gained at Talavera, and he (lord Grey) must again protest against using his Majesty's name for the purpose of influencing the deliberations of that House. As to the impression however which those General Orders were cited to prove, they only proved the impression which ministers wished to convey. When the noble earl talked of the impression made by the victory, as he called it, of Talavera, what had not ministers to answer for, for the deceptive impression which they strove to create, by the publication of extracts of dispatches from lord Wellington, which conveyed a totally different meaning from that of the dispatches themselves. Thus, in the extract which was published of a dispatch from lord Wellington, dated from Talavera, in which he says, "I cannot move from hence for want of the means of transport and provisions," was

It not meant that it should be understood that he could not advance? although ministers knew at the time that his dispatch stated that he could not retreat for want of these necessary means. His Majesty's ministers at the time they trumpeted forth the battle of Talavera, as a splendid and glorious victory, were in the possession of lord Wellington's dispatches, in which he stated the unfortunate situation of his army, the necessity of his retreating, and the difficulties he had to encounter in effecting that retreat. The impression made in the country was not to be wondered at when the publication of lord Wellington's dispatches was so managed as to carry all the appearance of the intelligence of a splendid victory. Had the news arrived during the sitting of parliament, and ministers had immediately moved for the Thanks of that House to lord Wellington, he (lord Grey) should have most readily and cordially joined, conceiving from the dispatches, as published in the Gazette, that a splendid and decisive victory had actually been gained; but, how great would afterwards have been his indignation, when he had discovered the unworthy deception practised by his Majesty's ministers? Under all these circumstances, whatever pain and reluctance he might feel in opposing a motion of this nature, believing as he did, that lord Wellington was an able, skilful, active and enterprising officer, and not wishing to oppose a Vote of Thanks to other officers employed for their skill and ability, or to the army, for the bravery and good conduct it displayed in the battle, he still must, in the execution of his duty as a member of that House, and for the reasons he had stated, oppose the motion now under consideration.

The Marquis *Wellesley* replied to the noble earl who had just sat down. If it was painful, he said, to the noble earl to perform a public duty by opposing the present motion, and that it was really painful to him would be readily believed by all who knew the honourable feelings which belonged to the character of that noble earl, the generosity of his nature, the liberality of his sentiments, and his proud descent from a person so highly distinguished for military talents and services: how painful must be the situation in which he stood, who could not but be open to private feeling, while he also had a public duty to perform: who had to vindicate the character and conduct of so

near and dear a relation as a brother; of an officer whose eminent qualities he had had such frequent opportunities of observing, qualities of which whatever opinion it might please the noble earl to entertain, were attested by the universal voice of the officers and soldiers of the armies he had commanded, and of the countries in whose defence they had been exerted: of Portugal where he was almost adored, and where he was invested with power little short of royal: and of Spain, where he was equally beloved by the people, and respected by the government. In standing forward on the present occasion in defence of lord Wellington, he might safely contend that his noble relative had taken a judicious view of the objects which he had to accomplish; of the means which he possessed for their accomplishment; and of the mode in which these means were to be applied. On these public grounds he was willing to try and rest the merits of lord Wellington, and confident of their strength, he would endeavour as far as possible to discharge his mind from the influence of all private feeling.—And now in the outset he must beg leave to observe that the noble earl did not seem very clearly to understand the objects of lord Wellington's operations. They were briefly these: His first thoughts were directed to the situation of Portugal. On the arrival of his brother in that country, he found that the enemy were not only in possession of its northern provinces, but that they manifested a disposition to advance into the south. It was indeed evident that the French did not intend to act merely on the defensive: but that they had formed a plan by which Soult and Victor were to advance from different points. The first object, therefore, of lord Wellington, was the deliverance of Portugal; and on the praise of the operation by which he expelled Soult, it was not necessary for him to dwell. In the eyes of all Portugal and of every military man, it was an operation as able, as active, as rapid and conclusive as any which the page of military history records. It was therefore surely unfair, as some noble lords have done, to describe such an operation merely as an affair with the rear-guard of Soult's corps. Having thus achieved the expulsion of Soult from the north of Portugal, lord Wellington proceeded to the south to oppose Victor, who had actually advanced in that direction, but who on the approach of lord

Wellington had thought it prudent to retreat. But here again lord Wellington was reproached with a delay of 10 days at Abrantes. This was another misconception, which it was proper to rectify, for in point of fact the delay imputed to his noble brother, was not protracted a moment beyond what was absolutely necessary, for refitting his army after so long, so rapid, and so fatiguing a march. Having effected that object, lord Wellington immediately advanced into Spain; and here he must beg leave to correct another error into which some noble lords on the other side of the House had fallen. A comparison had been drawn between the situation of that gallant and deeply lamented officer, sir J. Moore, and that of lord Wellington on their entering Spain. There was not, however, the least similarity between the two cases, and that dissimilarity arose from the different state of Spain at the two periods. When sir John Moore entered Spain, the members of the Central Junta had hardly taken their seats; their authority was scarcely acknowledged, and little or no organization had been effected in their armies. Hence sir John Moore had justly said, that on entering Spain he had neither seen a Spanish army nor a Spanish general. The part of the country, moreover, through which he had to pass, was deficient in resources; nor was he invested with sufficient authority to avail himself of those which it afforded. Such was the destitute situation of sir John Moore, while he had at his back the whole of the French army, commanded by the French emperor in person. In stating these circumstances, the noble marquis wished not to be considered as delivering any opinion with respect to the policy or impolicy of the march of sir J. Moore. That was a question upon which he wished to be considered as completely unpledged. All that he thought requisite for his present purpose, was, to state the naked fact.

Now, what was the situation of Spain when lord Wellington advanced into that country? The Central Government had long been established and their authority was generally recognized. The part of the country through which his march lay abounded in resources of every description, nor was it fair to entertain a doubt, of the power and disposition of the Spanish government, to render them available. The only hostile force which he would at first have to encounter, was Victor's

corps, consisting of 28,000 men. So circumstanced it was proposed to him both by the Spanish government and by general Cuesta to advance against Victor. What discretion could he have used, what justification could he have offered for declining such a proposal? It was not proposed by gen. Cuesta, as the noble earl seemed to insinuate, to march to Madrid, and to expel the enemy from the Spanish capital: but the joint request of the Junta, and of general Cuesta, was, that he would co-operate with the Spanish army in driving Victor beyond the Tagus, by which operation he would protect the southern provinces of Spain, one of the great objects of his instructions, and perhaps also compel the enemy to evacuate the northern provinces, another of the objects which it was thought very desirable to accomplish. Having thus to look to a government fully established; to a country abounding in provisions: to an army of 48,000 men well equipped and in all appearance well disciplined; to a general who possessed the confidence of Spain and of that army, how could lord Wellington have refused his assistance in the attainment of that limited object. Would not a refusal on his part have argued a supposition that the Spanish government was incompetent to perform its duty; that the country, though full of provisions, was incompetent or unwilling to supply them? How besides could he have answered for the safety of Portugal, unless a blow was struck against Victor that would have prevented him from joining and co-operating with Soult or any French corps that might invade that kingdom from the northward? By advancing into Spain, therefore, it was not Spain only that he was anxious to assist, but Portugal that he was resolved to defend. Mindful of his instructions, lord Wellington kept these main objects steadily in view, and he proceeded to the prosecution of them with zeal, courage, activity and judgment.

But in thus entering Spain, did lord Wellington take the necessary precautions for the security of his army? To this he would answer that his brother had taken every precaution that depended upon him, or which the prospect of things could have suggested at the moment.— Besides, was he to place no reliance on gen. Cuesta or his army with whom he was to co-operate? Was he to place no reliance on the Spanish government, who

solicited his assistance? Was he to place no reliance on the country which he came to defend? Did not the plan more-over concerted between him and gen. Cuesta hold out every promise of success? that plan was briefly this: lord Wellington was to move against Victor's corps in concert with gen. Cuesta. In the mean time gen. Venegas by a circuitous march was to advance towards and threaten Madrid, in order by this demonstration to draw off the attention of the French corps under gen. Sebastiani and king Joseph, and thus prevent their forming a junction with Victor. From this plan, if duly executed, lord Wellington was justified in expecting every success. Accordingly he advanced against Victor at Talavera on the 22d of July, and soon came in sight of the enemy, whom he proposed to attack on the following morning. Victor's corps was then unsupported by any other, and consisted of no more than 28,000 men. If therefore the attack upon Victor had been made on the morning of the 23d as proposed by lord Wellington, must not the result have been most glorious and complete, the more so as after Victor had been joined by the corps of Sebastiani and king Joseph, lord Wellington had been able to defeat him? And even had Soult afterwards advanced, would there not have been every certainty of another splendid victory? General Cuesta however refused to attack the enemy on that day; for what reason had never yet been explained; but the consequence was that Victor retreated, and made his escape on the very night of the 23d, and effected a junction with Sebastiani and king Joseph. At the same time general Venegas, who ought to have been at Arganda on the 22d, had received a counter order from the Junta not to move. It is true that that order was afterwards withdrawn; but Venegas only reached on the 29th the position which he ought to have occupied on the 22d. Of the reason why the Junta issued that counter order, although he made repeated enquiries, he had never been able to obtain any explanation. Such was the failure of a plan which seemed to have been so wisely contrived. Against such strange mismanagement what human prudence could provide? What general, what minister could stand if brought to your lordships' bar to answer for the consequences of such unlooked for, such unaccountable casualties?

He perfectly agreed with the noble lords

on the other side of the House respecting the necessity of a radical change in the government of Spain, and his opinions on that head, he believed, were not unknown. But that change could not be the work of a day; and were we to make no one exertion, not risk a single soldier in the Spanish cause, until Spain had attained the full perfection of a free state? It must no doubt be our wish to see Spain connect the action of the executive power which the spirit of the people, draw forth her own energies, and act a part worthy of herself and of her brave and generous ally, but it surely was not to be expected that she should reach at once the vigour of a free government, just emerging as she was from that dreadful oppression under which a wretched government had broken down the faculties of her people; emerging as she was from those inveterate habits and ancient prejudices, which have so long contracted her views, and retarded her improvement; emerging as she was from that disconnection and disunion between her different provinces, among which, however they might join in the hatred and detestation of their common enemy, no cordial harmony had prevailed in other respects. The thing was impossible, but were we therefore to abandon the Spaniards to the mercy of their cruel invaders? Were we therefore to desert them in this crisis of their fortunes?

With these observations he should now leave that part of the question, and come to the battle of Talavera itself and the circumstances which attended and followed it. In a military sense perhaps nothing more could be said of the result of that battle, than, that the British troops had succeeded in repulsing the attack of a French army almost double their numbers, the efforts of which had been chiefly directed against the British troops. But was there no skill, no bravery, no perseverance displayed in the mode in which that repulse was effected? Did no glory rebound from it to the character of the British arms? Has it not been acknowledged even by the enemy as the severest check they had yet sustained? Now as to its consequences. Were they really such as to disparage the merits, and mar the splendour of that day? He would boldly maintain that the defeat of the enemy at Talavera had essentially contributed to the main objects of the campaign. For unless



that blow had been struck against Victor, it would have been impossible to prevent the enemy from over-running the South of Spain, or from making a fresh irruption into Portugal. It saved the South of Spain from absolute destruction. It has afforded time to Portugal to organize her army, and to strengthen her military posts. It also enabled lord Wellington to take a position, where he might derive supplies from Spain at the same time that he drew nearer to his own magazines? Were not all these achievements essential to the objects of the expedition? And what was the general result? Until then, the French armies had been acting vigorously against Spain and Portugal; but since the battle of Talavera, they have been compelled to abandon their offensive operations and to resume the defensive. He should not attempt to diminish the disasters, which afterwards befel the Spanish arms. Both his noble brother and he himself had earnestly advised the Spaniards to keep to their defensive positions: but flushed with the victory of Talavera, and with hopes too sanguine of further successes, they advanced at all points; and the result but too fatally justified the propriety of the advice, that had been given to them. But he would not go into any critical disquisition of military discretion. It was enough for him to have shewn that in the prosecution and attainment of the objects, on which he was employed, lord Wellington made a judicious application of the means entrusted to his hands, and derived from them every advantage to which they could be turned. He arrested the progress of the French armies into the South of Spain, and procured a breathing time for Portugal to organize her forces, and improve all her means of defence. He would not take upon him to say, that Portugal was placed in a state of complete security; but he might safely assert, that time had been gained for producing an essential improvement, in the condition of her army; so that it would be enabled effectually to assist and co-operate with the British troops. In fine, Portugal was placed in a greater degree of security, than at any period since she has been menaced by France. All these advantages were fairly to be ascribed to the skill, the courage, and the activity which directed the exertions of lord Wellington and his army, and upon the whole he did not hesitate to say, that his brother was justly entitled to every distinction which his sovereign

has conferred on him, and to every honour and reward which it was in the power of that House to bestow, as any noble lord who for his personal services had obtained the same distinctions, or who sat there by descent from his illustrious ancestors.

Lord Grenville observed, that he never rose to perform his duty with greater pain than he did at this time; but a public duty it was, and he could not shrink from it. The view he had of the subject was this: from the first moment that it had been agitated he knew that it could not be regarded in that narrow light as to make this the sole question, whether eminent valour and even skill had been displayed on the day of battle. No; he thought that the subject must be treated in a manner which would shew the propriety of giving, in the first place, the information which his noble friend (Grey) had required on a former occasion respecting the campaign, and especially relative to that most calamitous event, the march into Spain. His opinion was supported by the manner in which his noble friend opposite (Wellesley) had discussed the subject. He had, and properly in his opinion, not confined himself to the transactions of the day of battle, but taken a comprehensive view of the causes and consequences of that battle. The events of twenty-four hours might be sufficient to prove the merits of the soldier, although the sufferings both before and after a battle might constitute no small portion even of the soldier's deserts. But the case of a general was widely different. This question was none of his seeking. But he must say, that even a victory, if attended with calamitous circumstances, did not deserve the thanks of that House. The conduct of lord Wellington ought to be examined as connected with the plans of the government at home, and as connected with the state of the country whose cause he had been sent to support; and it was for these reasons that he thought the information to which he had adverted ought to be granted before coming to any vote on this subject. If the Spanish forces had been directed by the spirit which distinguished the British troops, then, certainly, any one might be justified in forming the most brilliant expectations of the result of a plan in which both co-operated. But, as the case stood, the question was, whether a British army ought to have been risked in an enterprize which depended so much on Spanish co-operation. A plan was,

however, formed, and Victor was to be attacked by the combined armies, and when the moment of attack came, the Spanish general refused to co-operate. He was willing to suppose that lord Wellington had, by the letter or spirit of his instructions, been compelled to engage in this combined effort. But what, then, were we to think of our councils at home, which had exposed a British army to so much peril, by depending upon the efficacy of Spanish co-operation? Their lordships were then told, that general Venegas had been prevented from co-operating by counter-orders from the Spanish government. He called then upon their lordships to consider what the ministers had been doing for the last two years, to consider how much dependance they had in the course of that time placed upon such a government as this. The chief object of this ought to be preservation. Their lordships would reflect whether they would be justified in supporting them, in a continuation of error. We were now told that the security of Portugal was not complete, but that great reliance was to be placed upon the co-operation of the Portuguese with the British. Of this he would only say, that they ought to judge of the future from the past, that they ought to recollect the retreat for want of co-operation, and that the remnant of the army was in a situation not dissimilar to that in which it was placed by its advance to Talavera. This was most strongly impressed on his mind, and he could not avoid taking advantage of this opportunity to express his feelings. With regard to the immediate question, he thought that it could not be narrowed to the events of a particular day. He did not attribute these disastrous events to lord Wellington. Sure he was, that nobody could think he had any desire to do so. He believed that he was fettered by the nature of the service on which he had been sent, and by his instructions, and that the plan and its calamitous consequences were to be attributed to ministers. They had on a former night argued against what they called prejudging a question. Sure he was that they were now prejudging, when they called for the opinion of their lordships, and refused to produce the documents on which alone that opinion could be correctly founded.

The Vote of Thanks to lord Wellington, was put, and carried without a division. The motions of thanks to the in-

ferior officers and the army were then read.

Earl Grey professed his hearty concurrence in these motions. The inferior officers and the army had done their duty in the most admirable manner, and he hoped these motions would pass *nem. dis.* The motions were then unanimously carried.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Friday, January 26.*

[COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.] The order of the day was read, for taking into consideration the Speech of the lords commissioners, on the opening of the present session.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved the usual question "That a Supply be granted to his Majesty."

Mr. *Creevey* rose and observed, that as a passage in that Speech contained high encomiums upon the flourishing state of the foreign commerce of this country; before he could give his assent to the motion just proposed, he must request leave to ask some questions of his Majesty's ministers, respecting that system to which they attributed this flourishing success; but from which he apprehended consequences the very reverse.

The *Speaker* rose to remind the hon. gent. that if he had any objections to offer against the Supply, this was not the stage of proceeding in which it was usual to urge them; that would more regularly be done in a committee of the whole House. It was not in the usage of the House to discuss the motion now offered in the present stage of the business; the uniform practice had been to let this question pass, as of course, without discussion. Having reminded the hon. gent. of what was the usual mode of proceeding generally in practice, it must be for the discretion of the House to consider whether they would indulge the hon. gentleman in any latitude of discussion on the present occasion.

Mr. *Creevey* said, he saw upon the votes of the House, that the consideration of the Lord Commissioners' Speech was an order of the day; and he always understood it to be the undoubted right of every member to discuss in any stage, every question proposed in that House for adoption. He did not at present intend to go at any length into the general subject of the Supply; but before the House was called

on to vote that Supply implicitly, and in a general way, he felt that some information was necessary to the House, as well upon some topics in the Speech, as upon others highly important, which he, as well as many other gentlemen, were surprised to find totally omitted. Notwithstanding the high prosperity in the state of our foreign commerce boasted by his Majesty's ministers, it was, he believed a fact well known to every commercial man, that for all the articles of foreign produce, of late imported into this country for home consumption, we were obliged to make all our returns in actual specie, and not in produce or manufacture. Could any thing then, be clearer than that such a traffic, if longer continued, must speedily drain all the specie out of this country? Such an effect had already been felt to an alarming extent; and must not the necessary consequence of the exportation of specie, be an inordinate rise in the value of money, and a great depreciation of paper currency? Was it not already well known, that a traffic had been for some time carried on, of buying up specie, for the purposes of exportation, at an actual premium of 30 per cent. above its current value: and could any thing be more seriously injurious to the interests of the country than consequences such as these, resulting from this system of licences, under the Orders in Council, to which so much of our national prosperity was attributed? He wished, therefore, to know from his Majesty's ministers, whether it was their intention to persist in this system of commercial licences, for the importation of foreign produce, upon terms so ruinous to the national interest.—The other subject to which he had alluded, and upon which the Speech was most unaccountably silent, notwithstanding the intelligence of some recent transactions so highly alarming, was the alarming state of the affairs of India. For the last four years, scarce was there a word of communication given to that House relative to so important a branch of British territory, producing a revenue of no less than fifteen millions a year, except, indeed, when an application was made by the Company to that House for a loan of 1,500,000*l.* He understood that the India Company intended to apply in this session for another loan of two millions, under the sanction of his Majesty's ministers; and by them he now desired to be informed whether this was the fact. He also understood that the Company's Char-

ter was to be renewed in the coming spring. This was another point upon which it was highly necessary for the House and the country to be early and correctly informed; for surely it was a matter of the most serious concern to propose such measures without giving parliament full information upon the embarrassed state of the company's affairs, and ample time to deliberate respecting the policy of granting them a new loan and a new charter, after all that had happened since they had obtained the last. Upon these points he presumed ministers would have no objection to give the House some explicit information.

Mr. Rose said he should think it would better have become the hon. gent. to have sought more accurate information on the subject of our export and import trade, before he ventured to make a public assertion, that the whole of our import trade was of late carried on under the system of licences from the government, for an exportation of mere bullion, without any home produce or manufacture. The fact was, that for a very long time past our export trade had been carried on in manufactures, with a perpetual balance of millions in favour of this country, and to a degree of prosperity superior not only to any former period of war, but to the most favoured times of peace in the history of the British empire. It was possible that some parts of our import trade, from particular quarters, might be carried on by individuals, merely by an export of money. This, however, had no sanction from the government of the country, who did every thing in their power to prevent it. It was not impossible that some instances might have occurred, such as the hon. gent. had mentioned, of bullion being bought up at an advanced rate, to be sent out of the country. It was, however, scarcely possible, in the immense business of issuing licenses, that some abuses might not have been practised by some individuals. If, however, the hon. gent. knew of any such, and would have the goodness to point out any manner in which it was possible they could be detected or prevented, he might rely upon it that his advice should be thankfully received, and vigilantly adopted. But he would find it a difficult thing to persuade that House, or the merchants of this country to adopt such a policy as the suppression of a system under which the commerce of this country had prospered beyond all former example.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* supported the argument of Mr. Rose, and repeated his assertion of Tuesday night—that the amount of commercial exports, in actual manufactures and produce from this country, within the last year, exclusively of bullion, exceeded by a balance of from seven to eight millions any year of our history in the most flourishing times of peace; and by ten millions, any former year of war. With respect to the other question put by the hon. gent. he conceived it not to be the time for discussing that subject. If any such measure was in the contemplation of the India Company, as the application for a loan, or for a renewal of their charter, it must originate in the Court of Directors, and not in that House. His Majesty's ministers had no power to oblige the India Company to a disclosure of their intentions upon those heads. If they contemplated such a proceeding, they must proceed by petitioning the parliament; and it would be time enough to discuss those subjects, when they came before it in a proper shape.

Mr. *Tierney* was not disposed to give his Majesty's ministers the credit they seemed so anxious to assume for their Orders in Council and commercial licences, as the true source of all the commercial prosperity they boasted in the last year. He attributed this apparent prosperity to quite other causes; namely, to the long exclusion of our trade from some parts of the continent, which when occasionally opened for us, either by the wants of hostile nations, the enterprising spirit of our own merchants, or by the intervention of neutrals, created an extraordinary demand for British commodities for a time; and hence the apparent but fluctuating superiority of the period in question. But how much greater would these exports have been, had the Orders in Council never been issued, to debar us of the agency of neutrals, and had the trade of the country never been shackled by commercial licences. There were, besides, still stronger objections to this licensing system in another point of view, because it laid the commerce of the country at the feet of the minister; and enabled the government to exercise a partial influence for the advantage of those whom they considered their friends, and to the injury of those whom they might view in a different light. He would not positively charge them with such an exercise of their power; but he believed it was pretty well understood in

the world, that when a man had anything valuable to give, he was in a fair way of expecting something equivalent in return. Ministers sometimes required support, and merchants were sometimes members of parliament, or possessed political influence in some quarter; and if by any chance a merchant was favoured with a licence, perhaps exclusively, to trade to any particular country for the export or import of any given commodity, no doubt he would feel himself much obliged; he would consider the minister who gave it his friend, and would think nothing of losing a few nights rest, or sitting up now and then a few hours extraordinary, to attend a debate or division in that House. It sometimes happened, that in one week licences were given to trade to certain parts, and in the next they were stopped. In such cases, the licences themselves became, to those who had the good fortune to obtain them, lucrative commodities for traffic. He had heard of an instance where a single licence was sold for 1,000*l.*; and if these instances were frequent, every man must see what enormous degree of influence it would give to ministers.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* explained, by saying he never had spoken of the Orders in Council, or the system of licences, as eligible measures; on the contrary, he thought them abstractedly ineligible; but they were forced upon the government by the existing circumstances.

Mr. *Rose* assured the right hon. gent. (Mr. *Tierney*) that in issuing those licences the most perfect impartiality was observed, and no man's political principles or conduct ever thought of on such occasions.

Mr. *Ponsonby* attributed the comparative prosperity of our commerce of late, not to the Orders in Council, nor to the licensing system, but to the temporary suspension of the American embargo and non-intercourse, under an idea that all differences were adjusted with Mr. *Erskine*; and to the occurrence of the Austrian war, which attracted all the French troops from the ports of Holland and Germany.

Mr. *Stephen* said it had been remarked, that memory stood in an inverse ratio to wit. The wit of the right hon. gent. opposite (Mr. *Tierney*) they had frequent occasion to remark; but this night he had shewn, that he possessed the worst memory in the world. He must surely be seen to have done so, when he had stated that the Orders in Council had reduced

the trade of the country to the greatest state of distress, whereas, it must be in the recollection of the House, that they were issued in November, and that the state of stagnation had been proved to have existed in August and September. It was remarkable, however, that the two right hon. gentlemen had assigned very different reasons for the present great increase of trade. One assigned it to the effect of revulsion; the other to the Austrian war and the Walcheren Expedition. It had been alleged or insinuated that licences were given only to the friends of administration and yet it was admitted that the trade of the country, was carried on almost exclusively under the protection of licences, was great and extensive beyond all former precedent; he could not therefore but congratulate the gentlemen on the bench below him on the evidence which this afforded, that the whole commercial body of the people were friends to the present ministers.

Mr. *Ponsonby* assured the hon. and learned gent. that he never meant to ascribe the success of our trade to the Walcheren Expedition.

Mr. *Whitbread* was one of those who believed that the worst consequences had resulted from the Orders in Council—the trade was kept alive by relaxations and departures from them. As to the partiality which the system of licenses admitted, he had no doubt upon it; but he was forced to give credit to the assertions of ministers, that no partiality was observed in the granting of them—so far above the ordinary weaknesses of human nature were they. Perhaps, however, he could state instances of the conduct of past times, which did not proceed upon the same liberal principle. He remembered that, in the case of the restraint upon the importation of bark, the ministers granted a license to one merchant, who was a member of the House of Commons, (at least so report said). He did not state confidently that it was so; but if it was, what could be said to ministers who had so conducted themselves?

Mr. *Rose* knew of no such license as that which the hon. gent. had stated.

Mr. *Wilberforce* felt it due in justice to his Majesty's ministers, to declare, that in proposing the bill to prevent the exportation of bark, their object was not to prevent the enemy from getting bark, but to oblige them, if they were to get bark from this country at all, to get it with a certain proportion of other articles. He was

ready to grant, that the mode of carrying on our trade by licenses was very objectionable, and liable to great suspicion; and it was one of the unhappy features of the times that it was necessary to resort to such a practice. It was not to be supposed, if an increase of seven millions had taken place in the exports of the country, that any improper selection had been made of the persons to whom licences had been granted. It must be obvious that they had been granted indiscriminately to the whole of the commercial body, and not restricted to the friends of the government.

Mr. *Simeon* was of opinion that the Orders in Council were like every other measure of policy—intended to be strict only when they could injure the national enemy, and relaxed when they might benefit ourselves. It was admitted that trade had flourished. It was absurd to conceive that the system which benefited the whole should be radically injurious to the parts. If the body of British merchants were satisfied and grateful, it was idle to say that the individuals of that body were materially injured by the continuance of the system.

Mr. *A. Baring* said, the Orders in Council could never have originated with any man conversant in mercantile affairs. The trade was completely shackled; there was hardly a port to which they could sail without a license. He believed there was no partiality shewn, but still it was sufficient to know that the influence did exist. At the board of trade, there was not one, except the vice president (Mr. *Rose*), who knew any thing of the matter; the rest were lords, lawyers, and naturalists. To say that these Orders in Council were the foundation of our commercial prosperity, was absurd. In fact, they did not exist. The merchants of this country have not been permitted to trade to any country to which neutrals were not also admitted. It was impossible, therefore, that the commerce of this country could have been benefited by the exclusion of neutrals. When the state of the mercantile interests of this country, however, came fairly before the House; when the state of bullion and of exchange were taken into view, it would be seen we had not much on which to congratulate ourselves. It would be seen that we did not enjoy that real health essential to the well-being of commerce.—It was then agreed, that the House should on Monday resolve into a Committee of Supply.

[**EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.**].—Lord *Porchester* rose and spoke to the following effect:—Sir, when at the close of a former night's debate, I gave notice of the motion, which I shall this night have the honour to submit to the House, it was my intention to propose the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the conduct of the whole campaign. Upon reflection, however, I am persuaded that it will be much more conducive to the object I have in view, namely, to prove the incapacity and total want of system, that pervade all the military measures of his Majesty's ministers, to separate the different branches of the campaign, and institute a distinct inquiry into each; after which particular investigation, the several results may be more clearly summed up, and a general conclusion drawn with greater accuracy, justice and truth. I shall, therefore, in what I have to address to the House and in the motion with which I mean to conclude, confine myself exclusively to the policy and conduct of the late disastrous Expedition to the Scheldt; and when the House considers that, neither in the Speech from the throne nor in the Address to his Majesty upon it, is any thing contained, that holds out a promise or a pledge, that any inquiry will be instituted, I am persuaded, that gentlemen must feel not alone the propriety but the necessity of agreeing to my motion. The House has heard a noble lord (*Castlereagh*) who is so much concerned in these transactions, express his readiness, nay, his solicitude, to meet inquiry. I will call then, upon that noble lord and upon others, implicated equally with him in this transaction, who are heard to speak with an equal tone of confidence, as to their means of justification, to support me upon this occasion, in my endeavour to afford them an opportunity of redeeming their character—of rescuing themselves from a most severe imputation, by voting for that inquiry, which they have so boldly courted. It is due to that noble lord, therefore, it is in justice due to the administration and to the country at large, that inquiry should be instituted accordingly; and, as mercy has been disdained, and even penal visitation boldly challenged; that the scrutiny should not be denied nor deferred.—Before I proceed however, to state the grounds upon which this inquiry appears to me indispensably necessary to answer the ends of justice—to comply with the wishes, and to vindicate the ho-

mour of the country, I think it right to anticipate some of the objections usually made to a proposition of this nature, and which are, of course, likely to be brought forward in this instance. I never, indeed, recollect any proposition made in this House, for inquiry, in which something evasive has not been urged on the part of ministers, and I am inclined to apprehend that the desire for inquiry, on this occasion, professed by those, who were ministers—those who are now in office will contrive, if possible, to elude and to thwart. The objections likely to be made to my motion will, I suppose, apply to the time and the form in which it is submitted. To the latter I will first direct my attention.—My object is, that the inquiry shall be conducted by a Committee of the whole House, because that appears to me the most eligible mode of proceeding in the investigation of a question of such magnitude and importance. That magnitude and that importance are, indeed, such as to demand the exercise of the highest inquisitorial powers belonging to this House. Considering the sentiment, that universally prevails respecting the conduct and result of this Expedition—considering how loud and strong is the demand of our constituents upon this subject—and let us hope that they will not by any disappointment of their just expectations be urged to address us with more energy—I cannot consent to delegate the right of inquiry on this occasion to any select or secret Committee, by whom the course of investigation might be misdirected, or its bounds limited—before whom, possibly, garbled extracts, called documents, might be laid by ministers themselves, in order to produce a partial discussion. But I will not expose the case to such a risk. It is in a Committee of the whole House alone, we can have a fair case, because if necessary we can examine oral evidence at the Bar.—As to the objection respecting time, it may be said, that my motion ought not to be entertained until the papers promised by ministers shall be laid before the House. But there is no validity in that objection. It is indeed a delusive and shallow subterfuge, as my view is simply to establish the tribunal before I open my case—that before the papers and documents applicable to the case shall be brought forward, it should be known before what tribunal that case is to be tried.—The only end I have in view is to pledge the House to the institution of an inquiry. I do not propose

to prejudge any measure or any man, but to satisfy the country and to justify the House, which we ought to do as early as possible, by shewing, that it is our resolution to bring to a fair trial and judgment those, against whom the strongest grounds of suspicion exist—those against whom the most serious charges are generally entertained and are universally made. I trust and hope, that, in such an object, I shall have the support of all the real friends of inquiry. Sure I am, that the country will concur with me; that I shall be opposed by those only who wish to evade inquiry altogether. It is not my wish at this time to discuss the merits of the investigation. I do not wish now to put the inquiry upon its trial but to put his Majesty's ministers upon their trial. But I do not desire to put ministers upon their trial before they have had full opportunity of preparing their evidence and their defence; yet can the country endure to remain in doubt, whether such ministers shall be tried at all. To remove that doubt, to give assurance to the public, that the causes of the disaster and disgrace which have lately befallen us, shall be fully inquired into—that a transaction which has entailed such misfortunes upon England, while it has entirely closed the prospect of benefiting the continent, shall not pass without due investigation—that we will trace it to its source—that we will follow it throughout its progress—that we will endeavour to derive from that review all the means of instruction which experience can furnish to assist us in extricating the country from its present difficulties:—These are the important and salutary effects to be derived from the adoption of my motion: and these I trust will appear of sufficient magnitude to induce the House to accede to it.—If we examine any, or all the campaigns which have recently taken place, we shall find in each the same characteristics of ignorance and imbecility, the same departure from all the established principles of sound practice and military policy. Look at which you please, you perceive the same features of weakness and deficiency. The farther we advance the more we see of tardiness of preparation, of ignorance in conduct, of imbecility in combination, and of consequent failure in result. In fact, every operation was marred and rendered inefficient by the gross mismanagement of those to whom unfortunately the superintendence of our affairs is committed.

The whole course of their policy and proceedings served only to waste our strength, to exhaust our resources, and to expose and degrade our national character. In the Expedition to which my motion refers, the calamities which attended it, are, in fact, to be equalled only by the magnitude of its extensive and expensive preparation. When I charge ministers and their agents with having departed from every military principle, with having acted contrary to all acknowledged usage, particularly according to the practice of modern warfare, I feel the charge is strong; but, if I am able to prove its justice, is it possible to find in language, terms sufficiently strong to express the reprobation which ought to attach to their character and conduct who, with such evident incapacity, could have the presumption to undertake the government of a great nation?—When they were found to deviate from all established rules—to discard all the lessons of experience, and to take a singular and eccentric course, they might, if they happened to be successful throw a veil over their errors by their triumph and obtain a character for peculiar superiority—they might in such a case, be supposed to soar above the ordinary conceptions, by travelling with safety and success out of the ordinary track of mankind; they might indeed be regarded as prodigies, born to enlighten and elevate the human powers. But when their eccentricity has been only demonstrative of ignorance, and productive of inevitable disgrace—when they appear mere shallow-brained projectors, they must excite the scorn and derision of every thinking man, if it were not for the extent of the mischief to which their projects have led, which serve to produce against them a mingled sentiment of indignation and contempt. It is impossible indeed to look at the total want of capacity of these men, and consider the pre-eminent station they occupy, without surprise and indignation. Of the nature of their capacity I think the Expedition to Walcheren and the manner in which it was planned and conducted, quite a sufficient evidence. That Expedition the country has long been in the habit of considering as ruinous and disgraceful. For myself, I must say, that I have been always at a loss to account for the objects of this Expedition, until ministers themselves afforded some explanation. Notwithstanding the general impression, we are now told that this Expe-

dition really furnished matter for gratulation—that it presented a theme of joy, because we had demolished the basin of Flushing, and did such injury to the fortress as cannot be repaired in haste, and then only at considerable expence. This we had upon the authority of the minister: but we have lately heard rather a different story from an equally impartial authority. We hear it from the enemy, that the basin and fortifications of Flushing can be completely repaired without any material loss of time or extent of expence, but this statement is accompanied by the expression of a doubt, whether it would be politic in France to incur such expence or make these repairs? Our enemies had the unparalleled insolence, thus to tell his Majesty's ministers, that their conquests are good for nothing or profitable only to France. Is it then seriously to be maintained, that the idle flourish which the minister has thought proper in this case to introduce into the king's Speech is a result deserving the name of success upon an Expedition which has been attended with so much waste of human life, and with the expenditure of five millions of money? But was not the fall of Austria, under the foot of the conqueror, without an effort upon the part of this country to avert her fate, sufficient to outweigh the advantages arising from the destruction of an inferior arsenal, which the enemy did not think worth the trouble of repairing? But as to the real objects of this Expedition, they were according to the statement of ministers twofold.—The first, in order and importance, is said to be a diversion in favour of Austria; the second, the attainment of something solely British, or national, advantageous only to our own interest. Now how did ministers proceed towards either of these objects? As to the first, Austria, it will be recollected commenced the war on the 8th of April last; ministers were aware of her intentions to do so long before, and why, then, were they not prepared to give her prompt and effectual aid? Why, as usual, waste in slow and tedious preparation that time which was necessary for vigorous and decisive action? Why were we not forward to aid Austria after the battle of Esling, when a happy change of circumstances might have rendered that aid of the most important consequence? But no, ministers became active only when activity must be unavailing. They sent out these Expeditions after Austria had fallen, never

to rise again. On the 6th of July, the conqueror of the world was obliged to act on the defensive; but the battle of Wagram extinguished all the hopes and expectations which Europe began to feel. On the 12th of July the news of the armistice reached us, and on the 13th sailed the Expedition.—Here was judgment; here was consideration; setting all experience at defiance; when the minister, consistently with his invariable rule of acting, and contrary to all general principles and established practice, offered to administer medicine to the dead. But the minister was not only injudicious in the time, but in the place which he had chosen to create a diversion in favour of Austria. If he had sent in due season an adequate force to any of the ports, or vulnerable points on the coast of France, Buonaparté might have been somewhat more alarmed than he was likely to be for the fate of the island of Walcheren. But, why not send an Expedition to a point convenient to the scene of actual operations, why not rather send it to Italy than to Holland? It has been said, that we had not money nor troops, nor transports, to send out an Expedition so early as could be wished. But when we found these supplies for Holland, why could they not have been found for an Expedition to Germany or to Italy? Is it pretended that we were more liable to encounter difficulties in the one place than in the other—that we could not deal with the Italians or Germans because they were all like so many Jews, on as easy terms as we could with the Dutch—that we could not make paper currency as available among the one as among the other? Are such miserable pretences to be listened to? But, if ministers really experienced the want of money, troops and transports, how can they offer such circumstances as pleas of justification for their actual conduct? Why, I would ask, were they exposed or subject to such wants? They had time enough to prepare and signs enough to warn them of the necessity for preparation. The state of Spain was calculated to excite and keep alive the attention and energy of any set of men capable of feeling and activity, and they had besides, early notice of the intended movement of Austria. How, then, are they to account for not having on foot and in readiness an adequate disposable army?—But, it is alledged that the army commanded by sir John Moore, which necessarily formed the basis of the



force sent to Walcheren, was not in a state to move earlier. Let us, however, examine this allegation; sir John Moore's army embarked at Corunna upon the 18th of January, and is it to be maintained that that force could not be put in a state fit for active service until June or July following? I recollect that according to the reports laid before this House, sir John Moore's army was represented to have lost in this retreat and the action of Corunna, only about one-sixth of his original force. At least, such was the statement of ministers, and it was also affirmed, that this army brought away all its artillery, all its cavalry, with the exception of the loss of a few horses and some stores. Yet after such a report to parliament, it is now said, that the army whose condition had been so represented could not for six months afterwards be put in a state fit for action.—Is this to be taken as a specimen of the capacity of ministers to recruit an army; of their ability after reverses to repair the casualties and calamities of war? I am sorry to draw comparisons between them and the enemy, because those comparisons must be painful, where the result is so unfavourable to one's own country. But, we can hardly help contrasting on this occasion the fate of the army of Soult with that of the army of sir John Moore.—According to the published dispatches, Soult was completely routed in Portugal at the close of May—not a gun was left to him; no, nor even any baggage to cheer his melancholy retreat; and whither was he obliged to retreat—into Galicia, a hostile country, where, so far from looking for aid, he had to calculate upon resistance and embarrassment. Yet this discomfited general did not require six months to recruit his troops and prepare them for action. No, for on the 2d of August, after a circuitous and harrassing march, we find him fully qualified and able to conquer his conqueror, and compel him to a precipitate and sudden retreat. But to recruit an army after defeat, to repair the consequences of military reverses, has uniformly been the characteristic of great commanders, from Frederic the Great down to Buonaparté.—With regard to the next want of the minister, respecting transports, we are told, that it was necessary to wait for the arrival of the transports, from Lisbon, before the troops could be sent to Holland. But why were these transports at Lisbon? Was it thought necessary to detain them there for sir Arthur Welles-

ley's army in case it should be defeated and obliged finally to retreat.—In that case, we could not have had any transports to send to Holland, so that our ministers combined their plan with such peculiar judgment and felicity of arrangement that a defeat in Portugal would have prevented the Expedition to Holland. But I would ask why the minister had not a sufficiency of transports ready for any operation that might be deemed necessary?—Will the House accept the answer or excuse which ministers have made upon this subject? Would Buonaparté, do you suppose, listen to such an answer from any of his ministers?—or would any of his ministers attempt to offer such an excuse to him? Certainly not, because such an excuse is but an aggravation of the misconduct which our ministers intend it to extenuate. It was the duty of ministers to be provided with an ample supply of transports for the public service, and if they did not attend to that duty, it was not admissible in them to plead their neglect as a reason for not sending out an Expedition which, if proper to have been sent out at all, ought to have been sent in due time. I am speaking of what means they had provided, in order to act upon their own plan, and pointed out the inefficacy of these means to their own ends. My remarks apply to their arrangements for the execution of a plan, which plan was I contend in itself highly exceptionable. For if it was really meant to assist Austria by making a diversion in her favour, could any thing be more preposterous, than to choose a place for an Expedition, where there was no possible point of contact or communication with the power we professed a desire to support. The barriers between us in that situation and Austria were immense. We had it not in our power to advance a step without meeting a fortress, which, when captured, we must reduce our force to garrison, before we advanced farther. But lord Chatham found it impossible to advance at all. Antwerp, which according to the original plan, was first to be taken by a *coup de main*, stopped his career. But there was in the whole plan such a manifest proof of folly—such a disregard of all the precepts derivable from experience and established usage, that the result was such as might reasonably be looked for. If gentlemen will examine the history of military transactions—If they will only reflect upon the experience of their own times,

they must see that there are two principles which uniformly regulate all wise military arrangement:—the first is, to direct your main force to your main object, which, once attained, all minor objects will naturally follow;—the second, to divide and distract the enemy as much as possible. It is by attending closely to these two principles that France has been aggrandized, and her enemies destroyed—it is through our neglect of these principles that we have been uniformly defeated and disgraced. Does not the marked disregard of these principles strike the commonest observer in the conduct of the Expedition to which my motion refers? What was the main object of this Expedition?—the French fleet and Antwerp. Do they go at once to Antwerp?—No. The Expedition sailed for Walcheren on the 28th of July. It was accompanied by heavy cavalry, which, in fact, never landed, and other descriptions of force which was appropriate to service different to that entered upon. Upon the 28th of August, it was decided by our commander, that Antwerp was not assailable, and that our troops must retreat. Now, how was the long interval employed from the arrival of our force at Walcheren, until it was deemed advisable to come to this decision? Why, instead of proceeding at once to Antwerp, and leaving some of our shipping to blockade Flushing, such blockade would have rendered the force in that garrison, and all Walcheren, quite useless, Flushing was regularly besieged. Thus the force which might have been kept as it were in a cage, and not available to the enemy, was, by our laying down before Flushing, with double the number, rendered completely effective against us. But this was not all; before Flushing was reduced, a formidable force was collected at Antwerp; we had then to advance against a population armed and adverse, and this advance was to be made according to the admirable plan in order to take these people by surprise, to capture a fortress by a *coup de main*, after a month's preliminary notice. These, however, are not the only egregious blunders and faults belonging to this extraordinary transaction. It was obviously incumbent upon ministers to collect some information as to the nature and defensive state of the points of attack, before our army was sent out. Surely they ought to have known, whether Antwerp was a fortress or a town, whether it possessed the means of vigor-

ous resistance, or was assailable by a *coup de main*? These things ought to have been previously ascertained by ministers, without sending out their general, lord Chat-ham, with 40,000 men to reconnoitre the place or rather to act the part of spies.—Now we come to another point, upon which I think ministers have incurred a very serious responsibility, in which I can hardly suppose it possible for them satisfactorily to account for their conduct. I should wish to know why, when they determined to abandon the attack upon Antwerp as impracticable, they did not abandon Flushing as untenable? Common powers of observation were enough to convince them of the necessity of the one, as well as of the other. History, indeed, would have informed them, that Walcheren was not tenable without imminent and certain danger to the health of our brave troops. Why not, then, when the main objects of the Expedition were found to be unattainable, destroy Flushing at once, abandon the island, and rescue our army from that pestilence which had so dreadfully desolated its ranks? It is said, no doubt, that Walcheren was retained in consequence of a requisition from Austria, in the hope that by our continuing in possession of that island, Buonaparté might be influenced in his negotiations with that power. But is there any rational man who would believe this? The fallacy of the pretence was indeed obvious, from the conduct of ministers themselves. If it was meant to retain Walcheren as a feint, why proceeded to fortify the works of Flushing? why construct new works elsewhere in Walcheren, and expend a considerable sum on such fortifications? But supposing the only object of keeping it were, as stated, a demonstration to aid the views of Austria, is it not absurd to imagine, that such a demonstration could have any effect upon the mind of Buonaparté, or that in order to get possession of that island, or to avoid the delaying for two or three weeks his attack upon it, he would be induced to lower his tone or modify or moderate his terms with Austria. Yet this notion, so glaringly absurd, is offered as an apology for detaining our troops in this horribly pestilential island, where "nature sickened, and every gale was death."—The effect of disease upon our army in this unfortunate Expedition is not to be ascertained or decided upon merely from the report of actual deaths. For, according to the information I have received, the

greater part of the survivors is for life unfitted for any active service. What then, is a measure so productive of calamity, so pregnant with disasters, to escape inquiry; or are its authors to escape punishment?—Having gone through all the points which occur to me as connected with the policy or progress of this Expedition, I now proceed to consider the choice which ministers thought proper to make of a commander to direct its operations. I do not intend to complain of the selection. Although he was not one of those officers whom fame had noticed among her list of heroes—although he was not one of those who “in camps and tented fields had bled”—although he was much more familiar with the gaieties of London or the business of office, than with the annals of military experience or glory—yet I do not complain of the appointment of such an officer to command such an Expedition. He was, in fact, the most appropriate person that could be chosen. But if it were a wisely-planned Expedition, I should say, that it ought to be entrusted to an intelligent commander—to one who possessed the confidence of the army—to one experienced in modern warfare, as this was not the time for making hazardous experiments.—But, abortive and impracticable as the plan was, I should have thought it a pity to have the character of an officer of that description exposed to sacrifice, by rendering him responsible for the success of a measure which it would be impossible for such a man to comprehend or execute. No, lord Chatham was the fittest man for the station. This ill-fated Expedition was the favorite bantling of ministers. It required to be fostered by parental partiality, for it could have no claim to rational attachment. Such an Expedition could, in fact, be understood by themselves alone, and one of themselves alone was fit to command it.—Many other proofs of neglect and inattention have been mentioned to me with regard to the conduct of this Expedition, upon which I do not think it necessary to dwell at present. Among others, I have to state, that transports were sent out to Walcheren even after the order for its evacuation had actually reached the island. I have also heard of the sick and dying soldiers being most severely distressed for bedding, for clothing, and even necessary provisions and medicines. These things, I hope and trust, are not true. But yet they rest upon the statement of such au-

thorities, as to furnish an additional argument for inquiry. Indeed, the arguments for inquiry are numerous and irresistible; and unless you accede to these arguments, you cannot hope to have credit with the country for acting under the influence of reason or argument. In fact, it is necessary to your own character, and to establish some security against the repetition of similar blunders and the uncontroubled sway of incapacity, to vote an inquiry upon this occasion. Unless you do, imbecility may rule on—all military principles may be disregarded—and all the precepts of statesman-like judgment may be set at nought with impunity. Ministers may fancy themselves able, if they can only contrive to be active.—Expeditions may be multiplied, only to multiply disgrace—our armies may continue to be exposed to danger, without any just necessity, or rational object, to squander their blood for mere fame, for barren laurels which blossom on the brow, but never fructify. But what a series of folly and presumption have we witnessed under the direction of a minister, who tells the world that our sovereign can be safe only with his aid and guidance; under him who has degraded the reputation of our sovereign's army, who has scattered dismay through every part of his country, and destroyed the last hope of his allies. Do not such results furnish good grounds for inquiry? Is it possible that you ought to go on confiding in such a minister? What, let me ask you, has he done to deserve confidence, or rather, what has he not done to provoke distrust? If ever there was a time when inquiry was necessary to satisfy the wishes of the public, to consult the safety of the country, surely it is at present; at this moment, which may be well considered the most awful crisis that ever suspended the destinies of a mighty empire—a crisis rendered more alarming by the sentiment that universally and justly prevails, with regard to those to whom the administration of our government is committed. In these men, I have no hesitation in stating, that which must be admitted by every candid man, that the country has no confidence whatever: that the country can have no confidence whatever. They are, in fact, fallen to the lowest ebb in public estimation. The eyes and expectations of the country are fixed upon us [cries of hear! hear! upon the ministerial benches.] If gentlemen on the other

side think that I allude to a body of which I never was a member, they are extremely mistaken. I speak of this House, to which I am addressing myself, and while I have the honour to be a member of it, it shall be my study to maintain its consequence in the public estimation, as well as my anxious ambition to do my duty with fidelity. When I exhort you to comply with the wishes of the country in this instance, I am certain I consult the best means of supporting your consequence. I say again, that the expectations of the public look to us, and let me hope that they do not look in vain. If by your conduct on this occasion you should disappoint their expectations, you ought not to be surprised if those who wish to degrade you should find their wishes completely gratified. If you desire to be the champions of your King and country—if you desire to be the champions of your own character, it behoves you to consider the nature of the present occasion, and the consequences of disregarding the universal wish of that country which at present hopes, which would be willing to confide in you. But if you disappoint your constituents you may cease to be respected; you may be as little depended upon as the ministers you support by your votes. You cannot, believe me, impart strength to their weakness, but you may become sharers in their disgrace, involving your country and yourselves in their downfall. Let me hope that you will not only revolt at such a course of proceeding, but that consulting your own character and interest you will contribute by your vote this night to maintain the security and honour of England, and to revive the expiring spark which may yet serve to animate the hopes of a distressed people.—As I am among those who think that our country, if wisely governed, is in possession of ample means still to repel and overcome all the difficulty and danger by which it is menaced, I look for your vote with peculiar eagerness, as a means of contributing to the introduction of that wise system of government.—With respect to my motion for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the policy and conduct of the late Expedition to Walcheren, I shall not mention a time for the sitting of that Committee, until I learn from the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he thinks he will be able to lay before this House the promised documents upon this sub-

ject. I shall now conclude with moving “That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the policy and conduct of the late Expedition to the Scheldt.”

Mr. *Windham* *Quin* in seconding the motion of his noble friend, wished to take that opportunity of making a few observations upon the conduct of the Expedition, which appeared to him remarkable only for ignorance, imbecility and mismanagement. The first instance of neglect that struck him, on perusing the papers on the table, was the deficiency of means to carry into effect the attack upon Cadsand, there having been provided no more boats than would be sufficient to land 600 troops, and that at a time when 2,000 men were drawn up on the beach; so that it appeared, that there had been transports provided by the wise planners of the Expedition without boats, and soldiers sent without provisions. The consequence was, that though the batteries had commenced on the 5th, the enemy had been able, without molestation to throw a body of 3 or 4,000 men into Flushing across the Scheldt, before the communication with Cadsand was cut off. Upon the 15th of August, Flushing capitulated, but between the 15th and 24th, when the head quarters were established at Bathz, he lost sight of the commander in chief. There was no evidence of any active exertion, or indeed, of any adequate preparation for the accomplishment of the ulterior objects of the Expedition during that most important and critical period. He begged here to observe upon the ignorance in which the commander in chief had gone forth; for on the map he was supplied with, Bathz was laid many miles west of its actual position. As to the general policy of the Expedition, he had but few observations to make. It had two objects according to the views of its framers: one solely British, the destruction of the basin at Flushing, and the capture of some sail of the line. In that, however, it had failed. We had ransacked some stores, it was true, thrown in the basin, and destroyed a sea-wall; but we had also entombed one half of our gallant army. It had been said that the capture of Antwerp was an object of the Expedition, but he would ask any one who had considered the conduct of Buonaparté, since he had been under the view of the world, whether he thought it likely that he would have left Antwerp, the object of so much of his solicitude and care, in an unprepared state? The next

professed object of the Expedition was co-operation with Austria. Such co-operation he did not condemn, but that appeared to him to have been impracticable by such an Expedition; as it appeared even from Lord Chatham's dispatches, that Antwerp was in a state of complete defence, and covered by 35,000 men. Of that force he might safely assert, that not one man had been withdrawn from the armies contending against Austria. It was made up altogether of the artificers and population of the country, which had been trained to the use of arms. But supposing that Antwerp had been taken, whether was the army then to proceed? Was it to advance into a country bristled with fortifications? It was altogether unnecessary for them to enter into details to prove the extravagance of such a course. Every gentleman must be convinced of the absolute impossibility of carrying such a plan of the campaign into execution; and without that what was to become of the effectual co-operation with Austria? When he looked to all the circumstances of the case, the unfortunate weakness of the original plan, and the calamitous result of its ultimate failure, he could not conceive what possible objection could be made to the motion of his noble friend. It pre-judged no question; it decided no case; it barely called upon the House to give a pledge to the country that they should inquire into the causes of those disgraceful and disastrous failures, which spread grief and indignation throughout every class of the community. The right hon. gentlemen opposite could not complain of surprise, because they could not be cut off from their defence. They would have ample opportunity of laying the papers upon which they meant to rest their justification, on the table before the House should go into the Committee proposed by his noble friend. From what had taken place, however, in the early part of the speech of his noble friend, by the cheers of the gentlemen opposite, he was induced to suppose that the want of the papers would be urged as an objection against the inquiry. But it must be allowed, on all hands, that some inquiry was necessary; and if so, why should it not be conducted in the best, and most constitutional and comprehensive manner? He would call upon that House, therefore, by the sense of its dignity, by the magnitude and importance of the case, and by the obligations of the duty they

owed to their constituents and the country, to call for inquiry. He well remembered the answer which had been given to the city of London, that no inquiry was necessary into the conduct of the commanders, by sea or land, in the Expedition. But if no enquiry was necessary into the conduct of these officers, to whom was entrusted the execution of the objects of the Expedition, he must contend that it was the duty of that House to institute an inquiry into the conduct of those who had concerted it.

The question was called for, and strangers were withdrawing, when,

Mr. Croker rose and expressed a wish that the duty of replying to the noble mover, and the hon. seconder of this motion, had fallen into abler hands; but feeling at the same time, that in the course of the evening he should have to call upon the House to vote against the motion, he thought that he could at no time do it with less appearance of presumption, than when the House was on the point of going to a division. The speeches of the noble lord and hon. gent. though materially at variance in several parts, yet coincided in one particular, as both the speakers thought it would become that House to give a pledge that it would institute an inquiry into the circumstances attending the late Expedition. He had listened to the splendid oratory of the noble lord and the hon. gent. who followed him, with much attention, and with great personal pleasure. But good oratory, like good poetry, might not be the worse for fiction. Ministers had been spoken of as if they wished to elude enquiry and to shelter certain individuals from public justice. Which of his Majesty's ministers, he would ask, could it be the object of government to screen? Could it be the object of the present administration to screen those from inquiry who were no longer members of it? If that were the case, if ministers were so disposed towards those individuals, what became of the taunts and sarcasms respecting that disunion which had been so loudly complained of?—What became of those animosities, and of that hatred which had been spoken of as existing in the late cabinet? The noble lord had asked, why was not the late Expedition sent to the north of Germany instead of Walcheren? If ministers, said that noble lord, had money to throw away on a Dutchman,

why could not that money have been expended in an Expedition to the north of Germany? To this he would reply, that there was an immense difference between sending an Expedition to a place not more than twenty-four hours sail from our coast, and dispatching one by a circuitous way to the north of Germany, a distance of many hundred miles. That, however, was a subject not then to be discussed, and he felt he trespassed on the House by replying so fully to that which he would say had been so unfairly and uncandidly brought forward. When those papers and documents were before the House, which had been promised by his Majesty, he would prove that the detail into which the noble lord had entered had been greatly exaggerated in some parts, and wholly unfounded in others. He had spoken of the circumstances under which the Expedition sailed from this country, uncandidly stating the dates of the battles in Germany, without at the same time ingenuously stating to the House the periods at which those events became known in England. The noble lord had taken the same unfair advantage of the unfavourable state of the weather, and while he spoke of the battles of Aspern and Wagram in Germany as having been known earlier than it was possible for the information to reach this country, he had spoken of the Expedition as having been delayed by a want of promptitude on the part of government a fortnight after it was ready to sail. It was true, that the actions the hon. gen. had spoken of had taken place on the days he had particularized. It was true, that the battle of Aspern by which the victorious career of the enemy was suspended, was fought on the 21st and 22d of May; but it was also true that the news of that victory did not reach this country before the 8th of June, and on the very next day, on the 9th of June, the Expedition was undertaken. He supposed the noble lord would have had him, from his national propensity to blundering, have advised the Expedition to the Scheldt on the ground of the battle of Aspern, before the result of that battle had been heard of in this country. It might be asked, why was not the Expedition sent before the battle of Aspern? To this he would reply, that as his Majesty had not incited Austria to hostilities, as he ever was unwilling Austria should precipitate her-

self into a war with France, and had cautioned Austria against taking such a step, unless grounds existed for entertaining rational hopes of a successful issue: it would not have been prudent or politic to have lavished our means and wasted our resources, to prepare to aid Austria in case of an event which it was hoped would not take place. He asserted, that nothing had been done by this country to encourage such a struggle, till Austria had declared war against France, and committed herself; till the war had actually begun; till the die was cast and the fate of Austria was in her own hands. That done, then, and not till then, England made common cause with her, and gave her all the aid she could afford. Had ministers encouraged Austria previously, and been the cause of her entering into that disastrous war, they would have had a much heavier responsibility to bear than for all the failures that had taken place, even could those failures be proved to have originated with government. The noble lord had said he would confine himself to Walcheren; but far from doing this he had travelled into Spain whenever it suited his purpose or his argument to do so. They would hear as much said against rashness as they had heard against caution. The present was an age in which no military officer could hope to escape censure. He looked upon it as being one of the strongest symptoms of the decline of military feelings and spirit in the nation, and it was much to be lamented that no virtues, no talents, could expiate that original sin of receiving an office or a command from an hostile administration. Whether they managed so as to preserve their armies, or nobly advanced without regarding minor considerations, to risk every thing where the stake was worth risking, such officers were alike subjects of calumny and detraction. In the good old times when an officer went abroad on a dangerous service, he was generously upheld by the country; and even his errors were overlooked instead of being vindictively exposed to universal reprobation. The public wished to keep up the spirit of their armies—"Go," they cried, "go fight our battles, use your own discretion, but be brave!" Valour was then thought sufficient to atone even for misconduct. What general had ever lived who had not made some mistakes? Had any of the gallant officers who heard him been uniformly free from

the commission of errors? In the days of the great Marlborough a spirit existed in the country which put down such calumnious and illiberal attacks. With a view of contrasting the conduct of our generals with the good fortune of Buonaparté, the noble lord had asserted that the army beaten by us one day, and according to our accounts totally routed, appeared the next in greater number than before. Thus the force of Soult, which had been defeated by lord Wellington, afterwards appeared more formidable than ever, being 50,000 strong. He believed the noble lord gained his information on that subject from the *Moniteur*, a paper which he seemed to have perused with great attention. He had, however, to state, that the army which had appeared at Placentia was not that that had been defeated by lord Wellington. Soult's force, it was well known, had consisted of two divisions of the French army distinct from his own; Soult was a senior commander, and was consequently placed at the head of that force commanded by Ney and Mortier.—Some of the facts stated by the noble lord however, were at variance with those advanced by the hon. gent. who had given him his support. He did not ask the House to give credence either to the one or to the other, as he thought both equally unworthy their belief. Nor was he more anxious that they should give credit to himself implicitly. He only wished them to wait till they had an opportunity of inspecting the documents which were to be laid before them, and which would supply irrefragable evidence upon the subject. Had the noble lord confined himself to Walcheren, as he at first intended, he might have saved himself the trouble of making so long a speech, and a shorter answer would then have been necessary. He had complained of many circumstances connected with the Expedition, of the delay before it sailed, and the time which elapsed before the evacuation of Walcheren, &c. Might not those circumstances be satisfactorily explained by the papers which were to be produced? The whole of the noble lord's arguments were founded upon details which he could not possibly be yet fully acquainted with. Did the noble lord mean to say that the papers when produced would not shew that the measures he condemned were justifiable? For himself he should not even contend that no inquiry should take place, but that before the House should come to

any determination on the subject, they should at least know what it was they were to inquire into. After thanking his Majesty for the information he had been pleased to promise them, would it be consistent with their dignity, or respectful to their sovereign, to pledge themselves to institute an inquiry before the promised information was received? He did not say the promised documents ought not to be inspected or an inquiry instituted upon them; but it might be that the criminality, if criminality there should be attached to those concerned in the late Expedition, would fall on persons, who could not with propriety be examined upon an inquiry at their bar. If, for instance, the fault should appear to rest on the general officers, would the members of that House form themselves into a court-martial, or would they send those officers to answer for their conduct before a proper tribunal? Why should the House pledge itself to go into such an inquiry? It was inconvenient, and not only was it inconvenient, but was absolutely injurious to the public service and destructive of public justice. He never knew such an inquiry prove satisfactory—(Hear, hear, hear!) By gentlemen's cheering he supposed he was to understand that they admitted that to be a fact. If so, it was odd that they should be so anxious for a mode of inquiry, which they appeared so much to deprecate. The noble lord had in no small degree weakened his own arguments (if he did not compliment him too much in calling what had fallen from him arguments,) as, after speaking for an hour and a half, after exhausting every term of reproach that it was in his power to bestow, he had at last said he could not form a proper judgment on the subject without seeing the promised documents. This was evidently done with a view of reserving to himself a voice on another occasion. This he might find very convenient. The noble lord, indeed, had said with a gentle air, a mild voice, and a subdued accent, that he would not prejudge the case; but with his loud voice and impassioned tone he had told them, with appropriate gesticulation, that the facts he had stated to them spoke for themselves, and carried condemnation on the face of them.—Having thus far addressed himself to the noble lord, he would now take some notice of the hon. gent. by whom he had been seconded. A speech more against that which it was intended to support he had never heard.

The hon. gent. had complained of a want of boats to land a sufficient force on Cadsand and to prevent supplies being conveyed from Cadsand to Flushing. But he would take upon him to assert that no such inconvenience had been experienced. He felt no hesitation in contradicting the hon. gent. upon this point. (Hear, hear, hear!) He would repeat that the statement of the hon. gent. was unfounded in fact, and that single circumstance was enough to prove the propriety of waiting till all the documents should be produced. He had means of knowing more on that subject than the hon. gent. and when assertion went against assertion, in what manner would the House think it necessary to pledge itself to institute such an inquiry as had been called for? He would ask the House whether it would be respectful to the King, whether it would be to deal fairly by his Majesty's ministers, or candidly towards the gallant officers employed, after the vote recently given, to agree to that inquiry for which they were now called on, before the papers were produced, before they knew whether ministers or generals were likely to be the subject of that inquiry? It was not candid to take the opinion of the House twice on the same subject, and the present question differed only in words from that which they had so lately discussed. He wished the House distinctly to understand that he did not oppose inquiry, but that he only wished it deferred till they were in possession of those papers, which alone could enable them to decide whether or not it would be necessary. He concluded by moving the previous question.

Mr. Bathurst could not help admiring the lively manner and animated oratory of the hon. gent. who had just sat down: but doubted much whether his Majesty's ministers had in selecting him, chosen the best general to conduct their defence, or that of the Expedition. That hon. gent. had thought proper to charge upon the noble lord who brought forward this motion, and for so doing was intitled to the thanks of the country, with having acted in an uncandid manner; but that hon. member was not an old member of that House, and that might account for the manner in which he had animadverted upon the conduct and speech of that noble lord. He had himself risen principally in consequence of the hon. gent.'s attempt to hamper the discussions in that House, by the unguarded and unparliamentary manner in which he had introduced the

sacred name of his Majesty. He was on his part prepared to contend, that the adoption of the motion would not be disrespectful to his Majesty, and that it was the undoubted right of that House to discuss the conduct of Ministers, as well as the propriety of every measure of their administration. The hon. gent. had inadvertently perhaps, in this instance, endeavoured to impose a restriction upon the discretion of the House, which he felt it his duty to resist. Though he had voted on the former night with the majority, he did not look upon himself as thereby fettered as to his vote on this occasion. As he had been misunderstood with respect to the grounds of that vote which appeared not to have given satisfaction to the gentlemen on either side, he begged to state the reasons that induced him to vote as he had done. It was his opinion that the words of the Amendment then moved and which proposed inquiry went farther than that object, in anticipating the result of the inquiry, and therefore, he could not vote for it.—The hon. gent. had also observed, that it was not competent for them to vote now ~~for~~ a question which had been otherwise decided by a majority on a former occasion. He could not subscribe to this doctrine; and, though he had been misunderstood by gentlemen on both sides, he considered himself as free to give his vote, this night, as he had been on the former. He then gave his vote for the reasons he had stated, which appeared to him to be sound and sufficient. Yet a gentleman on this side (the Opposition,) had afterwards told him, that his vote was in opposition to one he had given in a former session, and that he was not acquainted with "Parliamentary tactics." He did not wish to be acquainted with any tactics; he voted on all occasions as his conscience dictated. He voted for the Address, but not against inquiry; and he opposed the Amendment, because it not only courted inquiry, but anticipated the result. The only difference of opinion now was, whether they should at this moment pledge themselves to enter into an inquiry, or should wait till the promised papers should be produced. There was then an end of all the objections against the speech of the noble lord, which went to establish evidence to prove the necessity for coming to the resolution now. The noble lord was placed in an awkward predicament; for if he had merely stated his object, he would have been answered,



"You have shewn no grounds why we should come to this decision;" and when he did state his grounds, he was accused by the hon. gent. of going into unfounded detail. The question, as it really stood, was a very fair one, and proper for discussion. By moving the previous question the hon. gent. admitted that a *prima facie* case for inquiry existed. There was a precedent in the case of the Spanish papers, on which occasion he had agreed, that it was proper to wait for their production before they voted inquiry necessary. But they were not to look for precedents, every question must stand on its own ground; and he thought if ever there was a time when inquiry was called for, it was now, when so much of the fortune, the interests and the fame of the country depended upon the issue. The noble lord, instead of being blamed for over-stating his case, ought to be thanked for his candour and moderation. He agreed with the noble lord, that it was not necessary to press the mode of inquiry upon the House, but they owed it to the country to give a distinct pledge that inquiry of some kind should take place. It could take place in no way but in a Committee, either of the whole House, or select: and all that was asked was that, be the manner what it may, the matter should at all events be investigated. It was of no consequence what the papers were, as the Committee need not go further if they were satisfactory; but, at all events, it was necessary to pledge themselves to the inquiry. It was necessary to satisfy the just, and not unreasonable, expectations of the country. The papers might state what was thought proper with respect to the number of the boats or the means of debarkation on Cadsand, but admiralty returns would not satisfy him; he must have *viva voce* evidence on this, and on every other important point connected with the Expedition. It was impossible for any papers to prove that a sufficient number of boats had been provided. It was alike impossible for papers to shew what the probability was that Antwerp, on a *coup de main*, would be found in a different state from that in which it afterwards appeared to be. He wished to know what were the probabilities of the success of the Expedition; what the calculations upon which they were founded, and also upon what grounds it was expected that the Expedition would arrive, in a given time, at a given point. Those

were subjects which no papers could explain, and which could only be learned from *viva voce* examinations. So also, with respect to the continuance of the British troops in Walcheren so long, and the grounds upon which that island was afterwards evacuated. There was another point also which he wished to have ascertained by inquiry, upon what ground it was thought that this Expedition would be a diversion in favour of Austria? This was not a military but a political subject, upon which the members of that House were as competent to judge as professional men. The House ought to pledge itself to the inquiry, and to constitute the tribunal.—The right hon. gent. then adverted to what had fallen from his right hon. friend (Mr. Yorke) last night, with respect to the disposition in the country, to examine closely into the conduct of general officers. His right hon. friend was well acquainted with history and the free constitution of this country, and he would find, that whenever important Expeditions had failed, the conductors of them had been subjected sometimes to unjust obloquy, but always to jealousy and inquiry. From the time of the Revolution to the present moment it had been so, and a remarkable instance presented itself to him at this moment, in the case of lord Howe, who was as much abused as ever commander was, till he wiped off all calumnies by the glorious first of June. He would not take upon himself to blame either the government or the officers; but when a great Expedition had failed, on which so much of our resources had been expended at a time when they ought to have been husbanded with such care, inquiry was necessary, and they ought to pledge themselves to it this night. The hon. gent. had said something about the altered state of the cabinet, but every minister belonging to it, whether divided or united, was answerable in his own person to the country. He hoped they would come out of the trial with credit, and wished the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had in this instance adopted the language of the Ex-Secretaries of State, who said, "inquiry is necessary to satisfy the people—it must be had, and the sooner it is had the better." He concluded by again defending the vote he would this night give, as consistent with that he had given on a former occasion.

Mr. Fuller declared himself of the same opinion with the right hon. gent. who had

just sat down; but really that gentleman generally spoke so long, that he was almost tempted to leave the room, (a buzz of murmur, and Order! order!) However, as there were so many of them in the House, if they would but shorten their speeches, it would afford an opportunity to hear the sentiments of many able gentlemen, who would be prevented by long winded harangues from addressing the House at all. With respect to the question before the House, he must remark, that if ministers were really disposed to inquiry they would have produced the papers to the House on that very day. They would, in that case, not have given an opportunity to any gentlemen to move for a Committee of inquiry; an inquiry, which in his view was absolutely necessary. The whole country, from one end to the other, was loudly calling for it; and the country, he must say, had a right to be informed where the fault lay, whether the Expedition had been badly planned, or badly executed. The inquiry, therefore, was indispensably necessary; and the sooner that House should decide upon it, the sooner they would prove themselves to be the real representatives of the people who sent them there.—As to what had been said respecting the language of the King's Speech, and the Address, that was of little signification, because they all knew, that these were always drawn up in a complimentary form, (a laugh). But it would have a bad effect, that it should go to the enemy, that on such a subject any difference of opinion existed; or that when the necessity for it was universally felt and known, no inquiry was to take place. An hon. member opposite (sir J. Sebright), had on a former night talked of his not having confidence in the existing government; but he would ask that hon. member, what confidence he could repose in him, who had done him all the disservice in his power, in order to turn him out of that House (loud laughter.) Another hon. gent. had used language towards his majesty's ministers, which was even still more severe. That right hon. gent. (Mr. Tierney), forsooth, did not mean to affront them, whilst he was, at the same time, applying to them the most pointed invectives. But he did not think it necessary to say more on the occasion, than that he should vote for the question for the inquiry. This was no time for shuffling; and if they wished to set aside the distrust which had been industriously ex-

cited against that House, nothing could remove it more effectually than to agree to the inquiry. If they should not he would tell them that something worse might come. The prosperity of this country, which contained more wealth, comforts and happiness, than any other in the world, was an object worth securing by inquiry. He was not for any new-fangled doctrines for altering or reforming the state of the representation in that House; but he thought that parliament should go further than the present inquiry, and appoint a Committee to examine into sinecure offices. They ought to take care that no man should hold a sinecure place without doing the duties of the office. They should ascertain what every man did for the money he received. It was more particularly necessary now, when the tax-gatherers were at every man's door threatening to proceed to extremities, unless they were paid; and when the orders for such rigour were given by persons holding sinecure offices of 10 or 20,000*l.* a year. He should, therefore, support the motion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* declared, in rising to state a few observations on the question, that it was not his intention to trespass at much length upon the time or attention of the House. But before he should apply himself more immediately to the subject in discussion, he hoped he should be allowed the liberty to express some surprize at the line which had been taken by his right hon. friend opposite (Mr. Bathurst) after what had passed on a former night. Nothing could be more fair than the manner, in which his hon. friend (Mr. Croker) had stated the question to the House. He had no difficulty in agreeing with his hon. friend that the real question then before the House was, whether without any information they should in the present instance decide upon inquiry, or whether they should wait till the papers promised in his Majesty's Speech should be laid upon their table, and they should thereby have the means of judging whether any or what particular species of inquiry was necessary. That was simply the question, and he besought the House not to suffer itself to be led away by any supposition that in agreeing to the previous question it would decide upon the point of inquiry or no inquiry. The only effect of the vote of that night would be to decide whether the inquiry should be then voted, or not till after the documents should be

produced to the House. The noble lord, as he understood him, intended to put two questions to him after the present motion was disposed of. He thought it would have been as well had he put, before the debate, one of them, which went to inquire how soon the papers could be produced; and to that he would reply, that he should be much disappointed indeed, if he were not able to lay them before the House on Monday. And still more to shew that ministers were anxious that the questions depending on them might be agitated as early as possible, while the office clerks were employed in copying some of them, others were actually in the course of being printed. He hoped not only to be able to bring them before the House on Monday, but by Tuesday he expected to be able to put into the hands of each member a printed copy of them. The question was therefore, whether they should then pledge themselves to go into a Committee of the whole House on the subject, or wait till they were in possession of that information which his Majesty thought would prove satisfactory. Gentlemen said that as the country had already called for an inquiry, therefore it was necessary to give a pledge that night. Inquiry was generally made to obtain information; but in the present instance, it was obvious, that gentlemen wanted not information, but a vote before the documents were before the House. If they should not be satisfied with that information which the King was of opinion would prove satisfactory, and which government could have no motive for advising him to lay before them, did they not think so too; he would ask if there would be any advantage lost by abstaining giving the pledge required that night? He wondered his hon. friend did not see the preposterous and extraordinary part the House would act, in voting for going into a Committee, without previously gaining that information of which it was so necessary it should be previously possessed, and then, after preparing to institute such an inquiry, to dissolve itself on the production of papers which might as well have been perused prior to the formation of the Committee, when, by waiting for the information promised, they would not lose a single day; say not a single hour, if eventually it should be thought necessary to institute an inquiry. Of what real importance could it be whether the inquiry

was to be made after or before the production of those papers? He had heard of parliamentary tactics; but he did not think they had shewn themselves good tacticians on the other side.—They had proved that they were not, by their conduct on the first night, or they would then have proposed an Amendment something like the question of this night; but in the pride of their strength, they had come down to that House, to propose such an Amendment to the Address as was perhaps never heard of before. Perhaps, indeed, there never was such an occasion; but he defied them to shew that ever such an Amendment was proposed before; that ever one was submitted to that House, which carried with it an expression condemning in unqualified terms those measures into which it professed a wish to inquire. And why was this to be done? Because it was their determination first to condemn, and they cared not what took place afterwards. Provided parliament adopted their condemnation they regarded not inquiry. Some, indeed, had asserted that inquiry was not necessary, as the measures they censured carried with them the evidence of their own condemnation. They did feel an awkwardness in moving for an inquiry into measures which they hesitated not to condemn. The course they had taken plainly demonstrated that it was not inquiry into the conduct but removal from office of ministers, for which they contended. They thought it idle to condescend to observe any thing like forms or even decency in their proceedings. On such an occasion they thought they might venture to overleap all forms. They were confident of victory, they brought forward all their strength, and never were they more completely disappointed than they were by the result of that night's discussion. The noble lord had found out at length that there was some error in the proceeding of that night, and thought, by bringing forward the present motion, they might yet stand some chance of eventual success. Why was it necessary to give the pledge required? Why institute an inquiry, when they might have the necessary information before such an inquiry could possibly be set on foot? When the proffered papers were set before them, they could then judge to what extent they were satisfactory, and then, and then only would be time to decide whether or not they ought to go

farther. They might then, indeed, without impropriety and with justice, decide whether it should be gone into by a select Committee, or by a Committee of the whole House. There might be some points contained in the documents that they might wish communicated to the whole House, or there might be some which they would wish confined to a select Committee. Would it be well therefore to decide which mode of inquiry they should adopt before they could tell which ought to have the preference? Gentlemen spoke of going into a Committee as if they had a tribunal to erect in Westminster-hall, which it would take some time to prepare for them. He thought it needless to give the pledge contained in the motion of the noble lord, and should, therefore, support the previous question, which would leave them perfectly at liberty to act as circumstances may require, or justice should render most expedient. His hon. friend, in speaking of the disrespect shewn to the King, had said nothing that merited reproof. It was hardly decent not to wait twenty four hours for the promised information: To decide, knowing nothing about the merits of the case;—to say we know better than you, though we know nothing at all about the matter;—to tell the Sovereign in effect, though you have promised us satisfactory information, we anticipate that the information you have promised cannot be satisfactory. Whatever the facts might be, no public inconvenience could result from so trifling a delay; and whatever gentlemen on the opposite side of the House might say, he felt assured that the people would not think the worse of that House for acting with becoming deliberation. They would appear to be less directed by party feelings or spirit if they agreed to wait for satisfactory information when it would be afforded to them in so short a time. But to gain information was not their object, a vote against ministers was all they wanted. They wanted them to be removed. It might be very fair for them to pursue that object, but he thought it was equally fair for him to unmask their intentions, and shew that they contended not for satisfactory information, not for the public interests, but for the possession of office and power. If they had the object in view, for which they affected to feel so much solicitude, they must know, that the line of conduct they pursued would not

lead to its attainment, or facilitate the production of the information they had a right to require, and the government, so far from wishing to withhold, was anxious in the extreme to produce to that House.

Mr. *Windham* said he was disposed, notwithstanding the triumphant tone of the right hon. gent. to retain, in common with his friends, that confidence which they had entertained in their strength on the first night of the session. He believed that the feeling of disappointment, mortification and anguish, which the right hon. gent. had attributed to his opponents had a firmer existence in his own mind and situation than in theirs. However, he should still continue to support the motion of his noble friend on the ground of duty. It was the duty of the House also to shew the country, that they were not to be biassed by the seemingly candid declarations of the minister. If ever there was a case which called for the unanimous vote of parliament, the late disastrous campaign was that case. Indeed, in his opinion, the vote ought to be carried by acclamation. It was not necessary to wait for papers in order to determine that inquiry was necessary. The information on which to ground opinion was already before parliament and the country. To be sure, the papers might have furnished an aggravated proof of guilt in some quarter or other, and might shew that the right hon. gentlemen were not chargeable with the whole blame of the failure, but it was unnecessary to wait for documents or proofs to ascertain whether there was calamity and failure. The House did not want them. If, indeed, after it had declared inquiry necessary, the House should proceed to ask for the production of papers, it could not be in order to ascertain whether there was blame, but it would be to know the aggravations of their conduct, or to judge how the instruments employed in the execution were committed, with those who advised the plans, in the responsibility. To satisfy the House that inquiry was necessary, it had only to look to Walcheren, to consider of the termination of the Expedition, and to contemplate the present state of the army that was sent there. Search the military annals of Great Britain, and there was no precedent of such extensive, complete, and unqualified failure. The greatest possible failure might take place, and still no blame attach any where; but here was an Expedition terminating in great disgrace and

unparalleled disaster, and with numerous presumptions of misconduct. It was not that the Expedition failed, but that it could not succeed, that the House and the country had to complain of. It was generated in calamity, and your troops were marched from their own shore direct to destruction. There were none of those extraordinary obstructions encountered which have often been so fatal to the best arranged operations; nothing in the conduct of the officers—no impediment from wind and weather, and the events proved, that where our troops came in contact with the enemy, success was the uniform consequence. In neither could there be traced any interruption to our eventful success through the fortune of war—a cause too frequently decisive upon some of its greatest and most extensive operations. It was demonstrable that this Expedition had failed and solely failed from pre-existing causes. Why ministers did not know of them, was a part of his accusation and their misconduct. They should have been aware of the nature of the climate, of the poisonous air of Walcheren. But the event proved, that they either did not know of them, or knowing that, they disregarded them. They marched the British army to its grave, to be extinguished amidst the pestilential air of Walcheren, to go out like a candle in a vault. In every view the House could take of the question, it must appear evident upon their own shewing, that ministers had completely failed. If it was taken up as a foreign object, with a hope of affecting the state of events at that time in Germany, its object was wholly frustrated, and if it was considered solely as a British object, the calamitous result, in that case, completely contradicted its purpose. The great and uncontrollable cause of the failure, arose from the utter impossibility that it could succeed. It would be a reproach for ever to the character of parliament, if it suffered its attention to be diverted for one single day, from taking steps of inquiry, by any vain delusive hope held out from the production of papers. By the way, he must be permitted to observe, that those papers, had ministers been sincere in their professions, should have been delivered the first day the House assembled. Let it not be said that they were not prepared. They who could foresee nothing else, must have, at least, foreseen that parliament was to be assembled. With so many months to

prepare they could have no excuse for not having all the documents on the first day of the session. The right hon. gent. concluded by observing, that he could not admit the explanation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, relative to the introduction of the King's name by the hon. gent. near him (Mr. Croker.) Such an introduction of it into the debates of that House ever had been and ever ought to be reprobated as a gross impropriety. Certainly it had on the present occasion proceeded from a very young member, and was probably to be ascribed to his want of sufficient parliamentary usage and experience.

Mr. Ponsonby then rose and said;—The right hon. gent. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has been pleased to tell this House, that the question they are now called upon to decide is, merely whether it shall proceed to the institution of an inquiry on Friday next, or on the succeeding Monday. That the point for which my noble friend contends, is nothing more than a difference of two days. That however, is not the question. It is far more important; it is, whether this House shall this night do its duty to the people of Great Britain, or wave it altogether through deferential indulgence to ministers. If the right hon. gent. should possess the power to prevail upon this House to adopt this unbecoming course, then, indeed, it is idle to hope, that what the country so loudly demands from one end of it to the other, will ever be effectually carried into practice. Who can hope it? Upon what foundation can rest your confidence? The minister of England, who is himself to be put upon his trial, whose conduct and whose policy are to become the serious objects of that investigation—he it is, who rises up in this House and desires us to suspend our course of proceeding, until he shall have furnished us with the stinted information which he may think proper to impart. Do not inquire, says he, as I myself will lay before you, will tell you all that, in my opinion, you ought to know upon this subject. What, I ask, would be thought of the application, if you, Sir, or any other man in the country, having a violator of the laws to punish for his transgressions, were about to appeal to the courts of justice for redress, but were suddenly called upon to desist from your legitimate course, under the promise, that the man whose guilt constituted the subject of your appeal, had declared his rea-

diness to tell his own story? Would credulity itself be imposed upon by such a puny contrivance? And shall this House, upon the assertion of an accused minister, desist from discharging that great obligation which public justice requires? But, forsooth, the right hon. gent. would this night appear not only not the enemy, but almost the advocate for inquiry. How long since has he become a convert to this doctrine? Was this the determination with which he advised his sovereign to give the well known answer to the petition of the corporation of London? Did he not in that answer declare, that he did not intend to institute any such proceeding; leaving it to parliament to take that course which in its wisdom it should think fit? Parliament has met, and is called upon by that very man who resigned to it the choice of its own conduct, to suspend its duties at his pleasure and caprice. He would wish us, whose duty it is, to probe these calamitous transactions throughout all their branches; to surrender our understanding to his direction, and rest satisfied with documents which he pleases to produce—documents no doubt calculated not to afford information to parliament, but to operate as a defence of the ministry. He has charged myself and my friends with having submitted to the consideration of this House an amendment incompatible with the principles of common justice, and which went to prejudge this question, I deny that the imputation is in any degree warranted by any part of our conduct. Was it prejudging to say, that Expeditions of mighty promise and most prodigal expenditure had terminated in failure and calamity? Did we want to wait for the production of his promised documents to ascertain that a brave and gallant army had been ingloriously sacrificed and wantonly slaughtered? If the grounds upon which we acted justified our opinion, I challenge him and his colleagues to prove that we went one step further. We limited ourselves to what was undeniable, and in calling for promised inquiry, we did not even insinuate who the persons were that were guilty and ought to be punished. This night the right hon. gent. unable to oppose the propriety of the course we have pursued, ventures to attribute certain motives to gentlemen on this side of the House. He tells us that inquiry is not our aim, but that we are endeavouring to procure a vote of this House against ministers:—in order to procure

their removal from office, and pave the way for our own elevation to power. And in the very breath in which he makes this charge, he laughs us to scorn for our unjustified confidence and signal disappointment. We know that the enemy has said that it was the genius of France conducted the British armies to Walcheren in the late Expedition. But no!!! It was not the genius of France; it was the demon of England, nurtured into malignant influence by the base dissensions and unprincipled cabals of a weak, divided, insincere, and incapable administration—an administration ill thought of by all, suspected by themselves, and despised by the country—an administration, a constituent member of which was engaged in a low and unmanly conspiracy to expel from station another constituent member of it; an administration, at the head of which now stands this minister, who, though an intrigue of this base, ungenerous and un-mixed quality, was in progress for months, has been obliged in this House to offer up in his own defence, that he was innocent, because he was ignorant? (Hear, hear!)

—This is the picture which he and his colleagues have drawn of themselves. What need was there that genius should confound what unequalled ignorance had devised? What needed our enemy to interpose his great power or his greater abilities when he had our ministers for auxiliaries? Why array the highest talents, to oppose the efforts of incapacity the most evident—to frustrate the councils of insincerity the most degrading? Behold at the head of the nation's councils a minister who knowing that, after this intrigue for months had terminated in an agreement to remove a colleague from an active and efficient situation in the cabinet, under the alledged imputation of his incapacity to discharge the functions of office, yet still suffered him, though thus pronounced incapable, to retain for months his office of war secretary, upon no other ground save that he could not reconcile the communication to his feelings. Where were his feelings for the people of England? Where were they for the liberties of Europe, whilst he suffered an incapable minister to remain in office? Where did the feelings of the right honourable gentleman slumber, when the best blood of the empire was shed to putrify in the poisonous air of Walcheren, there, amidst pestilence and death to linger, and to perish, in order to afford a colourable pretext to the noble

lord for retaining office until the minister of England could reconcile to his feelings this communication of the noble lord's (Castlereagh) acknowledged incapacity? There has indeed been much of failure and disgrace to deplore; already have we drawn almost to satiety from that polluted source; but if this House shall abstain from the exercise of its duties, it will give plausible and powerful pretexts to malignant men, hostile to the character of parliament. It will entitle them to say, that though such failures have occurred, and such disgrace been cast upon the country, yet there was no disgrace more signal, no disaster more aggravated, than that Great-Britain should have the curse of being ever represented by such a House of Commons as this.

Mr. Stephen said, that if the object of the previous question had been to preclude enquiry, it should not have had his support, for he thought that an enquiry was proper and necessary to satisfy the country; but that, as the papers would be produced in two days, he should vote for postponing the inquiry for that time. He was surprised to hear a right hon. gent. (Mr. Windham) talk of carrying the motion immediately by acclamation. The greater part of those who had suffered by the guillotine had been sent to it by acclamation.—That right hon. gent. he was sure would never be a convert to Jacobinism, and he should disdain to recommend its practice or to use its language. That right hon. gent. professed to think that because the motion only implied, that there was ground to put ministers on their trial, there was no need to wait for the promised papers; but he should be sorry to see that hon. gent. on a grand jury, if he thought it right to send a man to take his trial before he heard the evidence, offered in support of the bill of indictment. The livery of London in common-hall assembled might with less injustice vote censure against ministers by acclamation or upon newspaper reports; because they had no power to call for better and more satisfactory evidence; but what mighty evil could arise from a delay of two days, such as would justify that House in precipitating a vote without hearing such evidence as was offered for their consideration? If not material to the question whether the inquiry was proper, it might at least assist them in deciding what mode of inquiry and to what extent they ought to adopt.—He could not admit that the

mere failure of the Expedition to the Scheldt, or the ill success of our arms in Spain and Portugal, were sufficient grounds from which to infer criminal misconduct or incapacity on the part of government. When a country was placed in a situation in which there was perfect freedom of choice, whether to abstain from or prosecute military enterprises, there ill success might indeed furnish a reasonable presumption of misconduct in their authors or conductors. But a country might be, and he conceived England now was, in a situation similar to that of a town besieged by a powerful army, which the garrison was too feeble to encounter in the open field. In that case the best means of defence might be frequent sallies to delay the enemies ultimate success, and take the chance of contingencies which might bring final relief, although there were no hope of succeeding by such sallies, so as to raise the siege. He thought our continental efforts at present against our too formidable enemy were of this kind. Overmatched as we were by him in the field, the most we could hope in any quarter, was to delay his general operations, and even as to this partial and temporary success, the chances might be greatly against us every where; yet might it be unwise not to take them. If so, then it could not truly be argued, that failure and repulse were necessarily grounds of presumption against the wisdom of such attempts. It must depend upon the evidence of the particular nature of the enterprises, or of the particular causes of failure whether they deserved praise or blame.—As to the charge that our troops had been marched to their graves, it certainly had so far a foundation, that a great mortality had afterwards broken out amongst them.—But the delay of our operations and other unforeseen causes, and perhaps unavoidable ones, might have produced this calamitous result. He feared that wherever our armies had been employed in foreign service, the same evil had in a great degree been felt. In our West Indian campaigns he was sure that such had been the case, to an extent as dreadful, or more so, than any thing we had heard of in Walcheren. In the Expedition, for instance, against the French windward islands, in 1794, whole regiments, with few exceptions, were swept away by disease; and yet who thought of blaming the ministers of that day for embarking in that enterprise! The com-

manders received the thanks of parliament, and instead of being deterred by the fatal consequences of that campaign, our ministers entered on another and on a larger scale the next year, against St. Domingo and other colonies, where the same dreadful mortality ensued. He deplored such effects of war as much as any man; and thought they formed a strong objection to the employing our armies in foreign service where it could be avoided, but it was not fair to state the mischief as peculiar to the present case or as forming a conclusion presumptive against the government, unless we were prepared to condemn all former Expeditions where the same melancholy effects were felt, and to renounce the employment of our army in future, in continental or colonial service.—It ill became the right hon. gent. to condemn administration on this ground, for he himself was in office when the West Indian Expeditions of last war were undertaken. He was surprised also to hear that the hon. gent. argued from the failure of Expeditions to the criminality of their authors. What! had he forgot Buenos Ayres? Or had he forgot Quiberon, there it might truly be said in his own terms, that thousands of brave men had been marched to their graves; aye and consigned to them by acclamation.—The hon. and learned gent. concluded by remarking on the party spirit with which gentlemen on the other side attempted to turn the failure of the Expedition to their own political purpose of getting into power by the dismissal of their opponents. The public was led to expect a redress of grievances, and punishment of delinquents; but the gentlemen on the opposition bench had the more substantial game in view of obtaining possession of the government; and this was the true cause of their impatience. They reminded him of the squire of the valourous knight of La Mancha. The knight, like the people of England in this case, was intent on generous purposes, though with mistaken views; but the squire had always his eye to the main chance; and as soon as an adventure was achieved by his master, he conceived like the right hon. gent. that his own end was attained; and said, "I do beseech you, sir, give me immediately that same government."

Sir Samuel Romilly said that if ever there was a case to be decided on its own merits; independant of all collateral considerations and circumstances it was the

present question. It was a most fallacious representation of it, which had been made by his learned friend, who stated, that the question only was whether an inquiry should be voted now or on Monday. It was obvious, however, that if the papers were laid on the table on Monday, some time must be taken to consider them. If further papers should be judged necessary (as would in all probability be the case,) time must also be allowed for such additional papers to be prepared and printed. It was not therefore fair to state the delay would only be for a day or two, as it was extremely probable that a good deal of time must elapse before the inquiry founded on such papers could take place. But if the question really were whether the inquiry should be voted on that day or on Monday he should decidedly prefer the earlier day. This was the first time in his life that he had heard the doctrine, that we should be certain of criminality before we proceeded to inquiry. They all knew that a great calamity had befallen the country and could any doubt be seriously entertained whether an inquiry into the cause or causes of that heavy calamity ought not to take place. In cases respecting individuals in private life, it was enough to know that a great calamity had happened, or that the death of an individual had taken place, and the inquiry followed of course. They did not then wait until the person suspected or accused should think proper to tell his story.—It had been said that the object of the motion was to turn out the present ministers. How could inquiry turn out ministers, unless the result of the inquiry should shew them to be criminal? Why should his learned friend be apprehensive that the result of inquiry would be so fatal to an administration of which he was disposed to think so well? If, on the contrary, the inquiry should prove that no blame attached to them, they would only be more firmly established in their places in consequence of it. When it was argued that it was of very little importance whether inquiry should be voted this night or on Monday; he would then ask why, if it were of so little importance, ministers thought it worth while to give a serious opposition? He would ask, was there an individual present who had heard his majesty's ministers, and was not perfectly convinced that it was their intention, if they could by any means



evade it, that there should be no inquiry? Was not the course they were taking precisely the course which was the best calculated to evade inquiry? Was there any man of those who knew what the papers were that ministers intended to produce, who had the boldness to say, that even in his judgment, those papers would be satisfactory to the House and the public? If, in fact, it were only a question of 24 hours, he would say, that it was better to vote for enquiry now, and not to delay such a vote even for 24 hours. The House was then on its trial before the world, and should lose no time in acquitting itself in the eyes of the country. By giving impunity to ministers in cases of former failures, they had given them confidence to bring fresh disasters on the country. It was on the heads of the members of that House therefore that those calamities should rest: it was against them that the cries and reproaches of the widows and orphans of those who were sent through inglorious perils to an inglorious death in Walcheren should be directed, if they did not take the most prompt and effectual means of visiting those calamities on the heads of the guilty authors, whoever they might be. It was said, that any thing that would prevent the Chancellor of the Exchequer from being the minister of the country would leave the King without a defender. What! could it be said that in a country where his Majesty had not one personal enemy it was absolutely necessary that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer should be his defender? He thought there was no symptom more alarming, than to find that the vote of that House was often in opposition to the decided opinion of the public at large; and more especially, when it was known that many members professed out of doors opinions directly contrary to what was expressed by their votes in that House. When they were in the country among their neighbours, they were almost all for inquiry; but when they came up to town, they too often voted for the ministers.

Mr. *Leslie Foster* said he conceived, that, though there was strong presumption of misconduct in some quarter, it would be too much to vote for inquiry without the information which the papers might give. As the production of these papers would take place very shortly, he saw no objection to accede to the wishes of his

right hon. friend. He thought there was no question which ought less to be judged of by the disastrous event than the Expedition to Walcheren; and that they could not be led to the fair consideration of the subject, if guided only by the compass of the melancholy catastrophe by which it had been terminated. The mode most proper for carrying on the inquiry was, also a matter that required much deliberation. It was the glory of that House to be the grand inquest of the nation, and yet there were many cases in which the exercise of its inquisitorial powers was productive of inconveniences that could not be too cautiously avoided. He confessed himself anxious for inquiry; but not thinking that information could render him less fit for prosecuting it, he would agree to postpone, for so very inconsiderable a period, that investigation which he thought ultimately necessary.

General *Grosvenor* declared that upon such a question and under such circumstances he could not reconcile it to himself to give a silent vote. He was ready to confess that he felt the most anxious wish to support the motion of the noble lord. He was little disposed to dispute about forms, and as inquiry was his sole object, the sooner that inquiry should be decided upon, the more satisfactory it would be to his mind. He owed it also to the army, officers, and men—he owed it to the commander in chief, lord Chatham—he owed it to himself, as having a command in that army, to declare that he could not gratify them more than by voting for the speediest and most summary effectual inquiry, and he earnestly hoped that that inquiry would be conducted in the most open manner, and on the broadest grounds.

Sir *Home Popham*.—It is impossible for me, Sir, to give a silent vote upon this question, after the declaration of the hon. general who has just presented himself to your notice. He very confidently assures you, that he is obliged for his own sake, for the sake of the army and the noble lord who commanded it, to vote for inquiry. The same motives demand of me that I should, in the strongest and most explicit manner, press the House to go into the most minute inquiry into the conduct of the navy; and I am perfectly convinced, that such a course would be very congenial to the feelings of the gallant admiral who commanded that fleet, whose whole life has been tainted with

the most active and enterprising services, whose achievements have been equalled by few, excelled by none. I can assure this House, that many officers of the highest character and most eminent excellence were employed upon this service, and I am quite confident, that there is not a person in the profession who would not be happy to meet inquiry: the mode of inquiry, however, must depend on the wisdom of this House; and I am sure, Sir, it will take into its consideration how much more difficult it is to inquire into the conduct of naval officers than of those of the army; the first must be an examination into winds, tides, narrow channels, and a variety of other technical circumstances, which none but a sailor, and a sailor from his infancy, can understand. On the other hand, from peculiar circumstances, and the fashion of the times, half the kingdom are soldiers, and I now may have the honour of addressing myself to 300 field officers. But, Sir, as my object is inquiry into the execution of the Expedition, and not the policy, which must rest exclusively with the House, I can only say, that it is impossible to institute an inquiry too rigorous in its examination, or too early in its commencement, to meet the wishes of the whole navy.

Mr. *Eyre* could not, on the present occasion, vote on the side of administration, but as to their general conduct, he was convinced they possessed great merit, though the nature of that merit was not sufficiently understood by the country (a laugh:) under their auspices, our military and naval glory had greatly increased.

Mr. *H. Smith* was of opinion, that the House was bound to institute an inquiry; but he thought the consideration of the subject should be postponed to Monday.

Sir *G. Warrender* spoke strongly in support of the motion for inquiry.

Mr. *D. Brown* wished to postpone the question till Monday, when the papers would be laid on the table.

Mr. *Harvey* was of opinion, that there was a ground of complaint somewhere, and the truth would be obtained by inquiry. He could not, however, think of forming a Committee at that late hour. (A cry of No! no!) As that was not intended, he would vote for inquiry generally. It was due to the officers both of the army and navy.

Mr. *Wilberforce* said, he was surprised his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have made any oppo-

sition to the present motion. He had for thirty years that he had been in parliament, observed, that ministers had generally been hostile to inquiries, though he did not impute any improper motive to his right hon. friend in the present case. He wished however, that he would cheerfully accede to the feelings of the navy and army, which were so deeply implicated, when on an Expedition of such extraordinary magnitude, disgrace had been so generally thought to attach. He did not, for his own part, join in those epithets of folly and incapacity, which, many gentlemen on the other side of the House had thought proper to apply to his Majesty's present ministers who had planned the Expedition; for his right hon. friend below him (Mr. Canning) and the noble lord near him, were not men of that description; and they both, though no longer ministers, acknowledged their responsibility. His right hon. friend, however, argued in opposition to the present motion, why not defer it till Monday? He would, for his own part, answer that question by saying he wished to obtain the point now, this very evening, for he had been too long in parliament not to know, that if deferred till Monday, he could not but fear it would never be attained at all. Yet though he agreed that inquiry should take place, he was in doubt whether an enquiry at the bar of the House, or a Committee above stairs would be the better mode. It had been said, that many circumstances might occur which it would be improper to bring forward in so public a manner as at the bar of the House; he thought, however, on further consideration, that if the House determined on a public inquiry, the chairman might in particular cases report progress, and be instructed to move for a Committee above stairs, to examine into those particular matters, and to report their opinion to the Committee of the whole House. He should therefore vote for the motion of the noble lord.

Mr. *Boyle* (solicitor general for Scotland,) spoke in favour of the previous question.

Sir *W. Curtis* said, he rose to give his assent and support to the motion. (A laugh from the opposition side.) He did not know what gentlemen meant by that; but he would have them to know, that he gave his vote on all occasions, in as independent a manner, and with as free and

unbiassed a mind, as any member of that House. He believed the noble lord who commanded the Expedition, wished for an inquiry, and he thought for his own part, it was absolutely necessary, and would, therefore, vote for the motion made by the noble lord.

Mr. *Summer* said, he could not vote for the motion till information had been laid before the House. He did not, however, like to vote for the previous question; for though the previous question was very well understood in that House, he believed it was not out of it; and he would not wish it to be supposed that by voting against the motion, he was against an enquiry. He could wish that an adjournment of the debate might take place till Monday se'nnight.

Mr. *Lascelles* said he felt, from the general anxiety spread throughout the country, that an enquiry was expedient; but he thought it was only fair to wait till they had some information on the subject; and so short a delay as that required, certainly could not make much difference. He should therefore vote for the previous question.

Mr. *Henry Martin* said, it was the mere trick of the minister to get rid of the question, by moving the previous one; and what confidence could there be in a man who would resort to such means to keep himself in place for a few days? It was like a tree which was withered, and a particle of vegetation remained in the roots and throughout a sucker, but the moment it came in contact with the wholesome air, it decayed, expired, never to rise again; so would be the machinations of the right hon. gent. that night; for they would not be allowed to bud, but would be cut off by the wholesome determination and vote of that House on the division. If they were to get rid of it that night, what pledge did they give, that they would bring it to an ultimatum on Monday?

Mr. *W. Smith* rose to mark the essential difference between the motion itself and the mode proposed for getting rid of it. Every man in the House, and he believed nineteen-twentieths of the people out of doors, who thought inquiry necessary, did not want those papers to form their opinion on the subject. Which, he asked, would be the most important pledge, that of coming to an immediate resolution in favour of an enquiry at the bar of the House, or agreeing to the previous ques-

tion which was only moved for the purpose of putting it off indefinitely. He hoped therefore, that every gentleman who said he thought inquiry necessary, would evince his sincerity that night, by joining him in voting for the motion of the noble lord.

Mr. *Tierney* observed with great severity and point upon the manner in which the right hon. gent. had treated the two propositions that had come from that side of the House. The right hon. gent. had said a great deal of their confidence in their own strength, and of their disappointment on the first night, but he believed that the surprise was with the right hon. gent. attending himself not in a minority, and the effects of that surprize appeared in the altered manner of the right hon. gent. since. He was now upon his stilts, self-assured, and quite changed from that humble and subdued tone, in which he had on the first night thrown himself upon the House, and told them that he must stand by his sovereign, whereas now he called upon the House to stand by him. One gentleman under the gallery, in dealing out his compliments on the present administration, had forgot that he was applying to what is, the encomiums he had intended for what had been. The noble lord alluded to was no longer at the head of the war department; and notwithstanding that versatile variety of powers that had enabled lord Liverpool to take the circuit of all the different offices of the state, yet it remained to be proved that he was as efficient for his present situation as his predecessor. The case of Buenos Ayres that had been cited was not in point; for in that case there had been inquiry; and the unfortunate officer who had had the command of that Expedition had been broke. It had been said that the public, notwithstanding the nature of the previous question, might form wrong notions of it. The public do not technically understand, but practically they understood it as well as they did in that House, and would think it merely a trick to defeat inquiry. There was no need of further inquiry before the present motion—the calamity was notorious. What would be the feeling of any man, if upon seeing a man dead with twenty gashes in his head, and when it was proposed that they should go before the coroner (just what was proposed in the present case), some one should object, "No, no, never mind the coroner—but

here is a gentleman who will tell us his story about it"?—aye—but he may be the murderer himself. (A laugh.) With respect to the promise of inquiry contained in his Majesty's Speech, it was all very good, and he had great respect for it, and so forth, but considering it the promise of his Majesty's ministers he did not believe one word of it. For the House must remember that often before they had had promises of a similar nature, nay much stronger; and they all knew what had become of them. He wanted not papers, he wanted evidence, *viva voce* evidence at their bar; and nothing short of that would satisfy him. No gentleman had the boldness to suggest a secret committee or a select committee,—the inquiry must be carried on in a committee of the whole House. It had been frequently asserted that the object of the motion was to turn out ministers, and it was whimsical enough too that the right hon. gent. himself (the chancellor of the exchequer) had gravely stated that as an objection to the motion, as, if even that event should take place, it would be so deplorable a calamity. He for his own part had no hesitation openly to avow, that he was anxious to get them out, and most sincerely and ardently hoped, that the present motion might be attended with that very desirable effect. The right hon. gent. concluded by stating, that the confidence of the country in that House had been shaken, and that it seriously behoved them to endeavour to retrieve it. He did not blame the noble lord (Castlereagh) nor the right hon. gent. (Mr. Canning) for the silence observed by them; but he would confess that he felt very anxious to know, whether they meant to oppose the original motion for inquiry.

Mr. Gooch rose to rescue himself from the imputation of wishing to defeat inquiry, by voting for the previous question, which did not negative investigation, in proposing to delay it until the papers were before the House.

Mr. Canning was of opinion, that under the circumstances that had been stated, it would be better to postpone any direct motion for inquiry, until the House was in possession of the information promised. This was a deference which he conceived due to the government. But whatever the contents of these papers might be, they would not supersede the necessity of an inquiry of some kind. Inquiry could not be avoided, it must take place sooner

or later. Inconveniencies, however, would lie in the mode of inquiry that would result from the adoption of the motion. These he would state before he sat down. One of the most cogent arguments that he had heard in favour of an investigation, had fallen from two members, whom he might call the representatives of the army and navy, employed in the Expedition; and who, he presumed, spoke from authority, or at least from an authority higher than their own.—He agreed fully with both these gentlemen. But, if it should appear from the papers to be laid on the table, that blame was imputable to the commanders of the Expedition, an investigation at the bar of the House would certainly not be the most advisable or constitutional way to ascertain what portion of misconduct fell to each. The same objections would lie to an examination before a committee of that House. The most constitutional mode of proceeding in that case would be for the House to address his Majesty to cause the facts to be submitted to the regular and ordinary tribunal for deciding on military inculpation. It was to him a subject of considerable regret, that, when his Majesty was addressed, to cause an inquiry to be instituted into the failure of the Expedition to Walcheren, government did not deem it expedient to yield to the application, and come prepared to lay before parliament the result of that inquiry. He regretted that the precedent established on the occasion of the Convention of Cintra was not followed, and that the conduct of the officers inculpated was not submitted for investigation to the proper military tribunal. And here he would take the opportunity of repelling an accusation made against him, that he had ever entertained any wish or desire that all the facts connected with that most disgraceful and inglorious business should not undergo the fullest investigation. No inquiry before that House, or any selection from it, he feared, would be competent to embrace the misconduct, supposing any imputable to them, of the commanders of the Expedition. The case was different, however, with regard to the share that ministers had in the transaction. If blame was imputable to the plan or policy of the Expedition to Walcheren, he had nothing to say against the proposition of the noble lord, putting in, at the same time, his claim to a full share of the responsibility which the government that set it forward might have incurred. He

foresee one inconvenience from the adoption of the motion, namely, that it would pledge parliament to a particular mode of inquiry; a mode not the best calculated, in his opinion, to attain the ends which it proposed. Upon these grounds he thought it would be best to wait for the information that was promised. The practical delay would be but small. At the same time he thought that papers which were mentioned in the Speech from the throne, should have been sooner ready, and that not a moment should be lost in preparing the way for that public and impartial investigation, which no man in the House was more desirous than himself to see instituted. He would give his vote against the motion of the noble lord, but not in the hope of defeating inquiry, which could not, and must not be avoided. The country called for it; the country was entitled to it.

Sir *Home Popham* declared, that in what he said, he spoke under the influence of no authority, as the right hon. gent. insinuated, but from his own feelings.

Mr. *Canning* said he used the word authority not in an invidious, but in an ordinary sense; or, in other words, that his hon. friend, if he would allow him to call him so, spoke on the behalf of that part of the service to which he was engaged.

Mr. *Pattison* wished that the debate on the previous question should be adjourned to Monday se'nnight, and moved to that effect.

Mr. *Home Sumner* seconded the motion.

The question having been put from the chair,

Mr. *Ponsonby* warmly denounced this proposition, as another attempt to do the same trick under a different form, seeing, as the right hon. gent. had seen, that, from the temper of the House, the previous question would have been lost.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that, as a proof the present motion was not of his instigation, he meant to vote against it. The gallery was then cleared for a division, when Mr. *Pattison's* motion of adjournment was negatived without a division. The House then divided on the previous question.

For Lord *Porchester's* Motion - 195

Against it - - - - - 186

Majority - - - - - 9

The Committee of the whole House, to inquire into the causes of the failure of the *Walcheren Expedition*, was then fixed for Friday next.—Adjourned.

### List of the Majority.

Abercromby, Hon. J.	Grosvenor, gen.
Adam, W.	Hall, <i>sings</i> .
Adams, Ch.	Halsey, Jos.
Allan, A.	Hamilton, Id. A.
Althorp, viscount	Hammett, J.
Anstruther, sir J.	Hibbert, G.
Antonie, W. L.	Herbert, H. A.
Astell, W.	Hobhouse, B.
Aubrey, sir J.	Holford, G.
Babington, Th.	Horner, F.
Banks, H.	Howard, hon. Wm.
Baring, N.	Howard, H.
Baring, T.	Howorth, H.
Bathurst, rt. hon. C.	Hume, W. H.
Bernard, S.	Hurst, R.
Biddulph, R. M.	Hussey, T.
Blackford, B. P.	Hutchinson, hon. C.
Bradshaw, hon. A. C.	Jekyll, Joseph
Brand, hon. F.	Johnstone, G.
Brogden, J.	Keck, G. A. L.
Browne, N.	Kemp, T.
Burdett, sir F.	Kensington, Id.
Burrell, sir C. M.	Knox, hon. T.
Byng, G.	Lamb, hon. W.
Calcraft, J.	Lambton, H.
Calvert, N.	Leach, J.
Castlereagh, viscount	Lemon, sir W.
Cavendish, Id. G.	Lemon, John
Cavendish, Wm.	Lemon, Charles
Cocks, J.	Lester, T. L.
Codrington, C.	Lethbridge, T. B.
Coke, F. W.	Lloyd, J. M.
Coke, Ed.	Lloyd, sir E.
Colborne, N. W. R.	Lockhart, J. J.
Combe, H. C.	Longman, G.
Cooke, B.	Lubbock, sir J.
Cowper, hon. E. J.	Lyzon, hon. W.
Craig, J.	Iytleton, hon. W.
Crewey, T.	Macdonald, J.
Cripps, Jos.	Mahon, visc.
Curtis, sir W.	Maitland, E. F.
Cuthbert, J. R.	Manning, W.
Daly, rt. hon. D. B.	Markham, J.
Dickinson, W.	Martin, H.
Dundas, C.	Mathew, hon. M.
Egerton, J.	Maxwell, W.
Elliot, rt. hon. W.	Mexborough, earl
Ellice, W.	Milbank, sir R.
Estcourt, T.	Mildmay, sir H.
Evelyn, L.	Mills, C.
Euston, earl	Milner, sir W.
Eyre, A. H.	Moore, P.
Fellowes, hon. N.	Morpeth, visc.
Ferguson, gen.	Morris, E.
Fitzgerald, Id. H.	Mosley, sir O.
Fitzgerald, rt. hon. M.	Mostyn, sir T.
Fitzpatrick, rt. hon. R.	Neville, hon. R.
Fitzroy, Id. W.	Newark, visc.
Folkestone, visc.	Newport, sir J.
Frankland, W.	Northey, W.
Freemantle, W.	North, D.
Fuller, J.	Nugent, sir G.
Gascoigne, J.	O'Callaghan, J.
Gell, P.	O'Hara, C.
Giddy, D.	Ord, W.
Giles, D.	Ossulston, Id.
Gower, earl	Owen, T. L.
Graft, J. M.	Parnell, H.
Grattan, rt. hon. H.	Peiham, hon. C.
Greenhill, R.	Percy, earl
Grenfell, P.	Pigott, sir A.

Pollington, visc.  
 Ponsonby, rt. hon. G.  
 Ponsonby, hon. G.  
 Popham, sir H.  
 Porchester, M. (Teller)  
 Power, R.  
 Prittie, hon. F. A.  
 Pym, F.  
 Quin, hon. W.  
 Robinson, hon. F.  
 Romilly, sir S.  
 Saville, A.  
 Scudamore, R.  
 Sebright, sir J.  
 Sharp, R.  
 Shaw, sir J.  
 Shelley, T.  
 Sheridan, R. B.  
 Shipley, W.  
 Smith, G.  
 Smith, J.  
 Smith, S.  
 Smith, W.  
 Somerville, sir M.  
 Stanley, ld.  
 Stanforth, J.  
 Talbot, R. W.

Tarleton, gen.  
 Tavistock, marquiss  
 Taylor, M. A.  
 Temple, earl  
 Templetown, visc.  
 Thompson, T.  
 Thornton, H.  
 Tierney, rt. hon. G.  
 Townsend, ld.  
 Turton, sir T.  
 Vernon, G.  
 Walpole, hon. G.  
 Walpole, ld.  
 Ward, hon. J. W.  
 Wardle, col.  
 Warrender, sir G.  
 Western, C. C.  
 Wharton, J.  
 Whitbread, S.  
 Wilberforce, W.  
 Williams, sir R.  
 Williams, O.  
 Windham, rt. hon.  
 Wingham, sir R.  
 Wood, T.  
 Wynn, C. W.

Kingston, J.  
 Lascelles, hon. E.  
 Lascelles, hon. H.  
 Lesley, C. P.  
 Leicester, Hugh  
 Lockhart, sir A.  
 Lockart, W. E.  
 Loftus, gen.  
 Long, rt. hon. C.  
 Louvaine, lord  
 Lowther, James  
 Lowther, J.  
 Lushington, S. R.  
 Luttrell, J. F.  
 Macleod, R. B.  
 Magens, M. T.  
 Mahon, hon. S.  
 Maitland, J.  
 Manners, lord C.  
 Manners, lord R.  
 Marriott, J.  
 Maxwell, W.  
 Mellish, W.  
 Montague, M.  
 Montgomery, sir H.  
 Montgomery, sir J.  
 Moore, lord H.  
 Morris, R.  
 Muncester, ld.  
 Murray, ld. J.  
 Murray, sir P.  
 Murray, John  
 Needham, hon. F.  
 Nepean, sir E.  
 Neville, R.  
 Nicholl, sir J.  
 Norton, hon. J. C.  
 O'Neal, hon. J.  
 Ord, sir J.  
 Pakenham, hon. H.  
 Pattison, J.  
 Peele, R.  
 Perceval, rt. hon. S.  
 Phipps, hon. E.  
 Pitt, W. M.  
 Plomer, sir T.  
 Pochin, C.  
 Pocock, G.  
 Portman, E. B.

Pendergrast, M. G.  
 Pulteney, sir J.  
 Richardson, W.  
 Robinson, J.  
 Rochfort, G.  
 Rose, rt. hon. G.  
 Rose, G. H.  
 Russel, M.  
 Scott, rt. hon. sir W.  
 Scott, C.  
 Sheldon, R.  
 Simeon, J.  
 Sinclair, sir J.  
 Singleton, M.  
 Smith, H.  
 Smith, T. A.  
 Sneyd, N.  
 Somerset, ld. A.  
 Somerset, ld. Ch.  
 Stanhope, W. S.  
 Stephen, J.  
 Steward, G.  
 Stirling, sir W.  
 Strahan, A.  
 Strutt, J. H.  
 Sumner, G. H.  
 Swann, H.  
 Sykes, sir M.  
 Taylor, W.  
 Thompson, sir T.  
 Thornton, S.  
 Thynne, ld. G.  
 Thynne, ld. J.  
 Townshend, hon. W.  
 Townshend, hon. F.  
 Tremayne, J. H.  
 Vander Heyden—  
 Vyse, R. W. H.  
 Wallace, rt. hon.—  
 Ward, R.  
 Wedderburn, sir D.  
 Wemys, W.  
 Wharton, R.  
 Williams, R.  
 Wilson, G.  
 Wood, sir M.  
 Wyndham, Ch.  
 Yarke, rt. hon. C.

#### *List of the Minority.*

Adams, W.  
 Arbuthnot, rt. hon. W.  
 Bagwell, rt. hon. W.  
 Baker, P. W.  
 Barry, J. M.  
 Beaumont, col.  
 Benyon, R.  
 Beresford, J. C.  
 Beresford, lord G.  
 Beresford, P.  
 Bickerton, sir R.  
 Binning, ld.  
 Bourne, S.  
 Bowyer, T.  
 Doyle, D.  
 Broderick, hon. W.  
 Brooke, ld.  
 Browne, rt. hon. D.  
 Browne, J. H.  
 Buller, J.  
 Burton, F.  
 Calvert, J.  
 Campbell, A.  
 Canning, rt. hon. G.  
 Canning, G.  
 Chaplin, C.  
 Chute, W.  
 Clements, hon. J.  
 Clinton, H.  
 Clive, visc.  
 Clive, W.  
 Clive, H.  
 Clonmel, earl  
 Cockrel, sir Ch.  
 Colquhoun, A.  
 Cooper, hon. A.  
 Cotterell, sir J.  
 Croker, J. W. (Teller)  
 Curzon, hon. R.  
 Daly, J.  
 Davies, R. H.  
 Dawkins, J.  
 Desbrowe, E.  
 Duckett, G.  
 Dufferin, ld.  
 Dugdale, D. S.  
 Duigenan, rt. hon. P.  
 Ellis, C. R.  
 Everett, T.  
 Farmer, W. M.  
 Farquhar, J.  
 Fellows, W. H.  
 Finch, hon. E.  
 Fitzgerald, A.  
 Fitzharris, visc.  
 Fitzbush, W.  
 Foster, rt. hon. J.  
 Foster, hon. T.  
 Foster, J. L.  
 Fonlkes, E.  
 Gibbs, sir V.  
 Gipps, G.  
 Glasford, H.  
 Gooch, T. S.  
 Gordon, J.  
 Gower, ld. G. L.  
 Graham, sir J.  
 Grant, F. W.  
 Grant, sir W.  
 Guernsey, ld.  
 Hall, B.  
 Hamilton, H.  
 Harbord, hon. J. W.  
 Harvey, E.  
 Henniker, lord  
 Hill, sir G.  
 Hinchinbrooke, visc.  
 Holmes, W.  
 Hope, hon. A.  
 Houston, A.  
 Howard, hon. T. G.  
 Hughan, T.  
 Hume, sir A.  
 Jenkinson, hon. C.  
 Joddrell, H.  
 Jones, G.  
 Irvine, J.  
 Kenrick, W.

#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Monday, January 29.*

[GENERAL ORDERS RESPECTING THE BATTLE OF TALAVERA.]—Earl Grey, referring to what had been said by the earl of Liverpool, on Friday night, respecting the impression made by the receipt of intelligence of the Battle of Talavera, and the General Orders issued upon that occasion; wished to be informed, who the Military advisers of his Majesty were; the noble earl made use of that term, in stating by whose advice those General Orders were issued.

The Earl of *Liverpool* said, that the term military advisers, applied to the Commander in Chief and his Staff, but he did not mean to state, that it was solely by their

advice that the General Orders, referred to, were issued; but, on the contrary, he stated that his Majesty's ministers were responsible for that measure, it having been adopted with their concurrence.

Earl Grey thought the statement of the noble earl not sufficiently satisfactory, as it did not explain by whose advice the General Orders were issued. If those orders were merely the act of his Majesty's ministers, then the impression, which the noble earl talked of, was merely that which they themselves had created.

The Earl of *Liverpool* contended that it was not a proper question to ask, at whose suggestion any measure was adopted. He had already stated, that his Majesty's ministers were responsible for the Orders alluded to. His Majesty's military advisers would not, of course, direct the adoption of any measure without the permission of his Majesty's government, nor would the latter adopt any military measure without the concurrence of the former.

Earl Grey observed, that he must then be satisfied with understanding that his Majesty's military advisers and his Majesty's ministers had both agreed in issuing the General Orders.

The conversation here dropped.

[EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.] The Earl of *Liverpool* presented a number of Papers, consisting of Military Correspondence, &c. relative to this Expedition, and observed, that the greater part of the Papers would be ready for delivery on Wednesday.

The Marquis of *Lansdowne*, referring to the notice he had given on a former day for Thursday next, for a motion of inquiry respecting the Campaign, said, that the House of Commons having since determined to institute an inquiry, and which he was bound to suppose would be a strict and effectual inquiry into the causes and consequences of the calamitous Expedition to the Scheldt, and it having been suggested to him, that as the result of that Inquiry might be to bring the authors of those calamities, whoever they were, judicially before that House, it would not be proper to adopt any proceeding which might tend to prejudice a question on which they might be afterwards called upon judicially to decide; he therefore moved to discharge the order for the attendance of their lordships on Thursday, reserving to himself the right of again bringing forward the question at a future period, if circumstances should render it necessary. At the same

time, as it was requisite they should have every possible information before them, he wished to give notice of his intention to move on Monday for some further Papers in addition to those produced by ministers.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, January 29:

[COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.] On the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the House should go into a Committee of Supply,

Lord *Mahon* rose to ask a question of the right honourable gentleman. He stated that at a time when the weight of taxes was so severely felt by the people, it was very important that they should be equally distributed over the country. He had been much struck by observing in the finance accounts of last year, the very small proportion which Scotland contributed to the revenues of the country, though that able financier, Mr. Pitt, when he imposed the income tax, had estimated the taxable revenue of Scotland, to be one-eighth of that of England. Instead however, of proving productive to that account, the produce of the permanent and annual taxes in England amounted to more than thirty-nine millions, while the amount of them in Scotland was little more than three millions. In the total amount of the war taxes the disproportion was equally apparent, for, whilst in England they amounted to twenty millions, they did not in Scotland exceed one million. The total amount of taxes was in England above 59 millions, and in Scotland very little more than 4 millions. The property tax in Scotland produced only about 600,000*l.* while in England it produced eleven millions. If the produce of the property tax were to be taken as a criterion of the income of the country the income of Scotland would appear to be about three millions, which was less than the sum paid by that country in taxes. This was also a ground for supposing that there was some great deficiency in the collection of taxes from that part of the country. Lord *Mahon* concluded by observing, that he did not mean to throw any blame upon ministers, or to charge the Chancellor of the Exchequer with neglect upon a subject which must naturally have excited his attention, and he hoped that the right hon. gent. would explain the circumstance to which he had

adverted, in a satisfactory manner. If, however, that should not be the case, perhaps the House would think it right to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the subject; and he might, perhaps, give notice of such a motion on a future day.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* did not think that the circumstance to which the noble lord adverted arose from any neglect in the collection of the taxes in Scotland. The difference between the estimated proportions, he rather thought, arose from the increased prosperity of England, from which the taxes produced much more than was expected. He was sure that in Scotland they did not think themselves favoured in the collection; for he had been called upon to attend to representations of a certain description of persons there, who were of opinion, that the proportionate burthen upon them was heavier than it ought to be.

Lord *Mahon* could not conceive how the produce of the Income Tax should be 11 millions in England, and only 600,000*l.* in Scotland.

Mr. *Horner* thought the House was entitled to have the mistake, if any existed, cleared up. He himself had been struck with the circumstances adverted to by his noble friend; and though he had no official information on the subject, he was informed by good authority, that the deficiency in Scotland arose from a tardiness in the collection. There might, however, be a particular description of persons who might have reason to complain.

The House then went into the Committee.

Sir *John Newport* said, he conceived the present a fit opportunity to offer a few observations to the House on the subject of Supply. In the speech of the lords commissioners, a strong intimation was given, that it was still intended to carry on the war, in Spain and Portugal. The House had been told, that in voting for the Address in answer to that Speech, it was not pledged upon this subject. He decidedly protested against pledging this country, burthened and borne down as the people were with taxes, to carry on a war in a quarter, and upon a scale which, while it must be ruinous to our resources, was utterly hopeless as to any ulterior object; and, if after all the miseries already brought upon the country, by the endeavour to defend Portugal (Spain having been, as he understood, now abandoned),

the same course was still to be persevered in, he could see no other result than the accumulation of dangers that must be fatal to this nation. He warned the House against suffering itself to be drawn by little gradations into the support of such a purpose. They had already the authority of a great military officer, the lamented sir *John Moore*, that Portugal was not defensible; and if that was the case, under the circumstances from which he formed his judgment, how much more hopeless must such a prospect be now, while the armies of France, disengaged from all other objects, and in possession of Spain, could at any time, march such a force into Portugal, as must overwhelm any army this country could send thither! He protested, therefore, against exposing any longer our brave troops to the risk of being out-numbered, subdued, and perhaps cut off before they should be able to escape by re-embarkation in their own ships. He warned his Majesty's ministers against continuing this hopeless contest, in compliance with the whim or fancy of the noble person whose alliance they had lately obtained, and whose brother filled a kind of vice-royalty in Portugal. He pledged himself to oppose such a purpose on every occasion, and he could not even let this opportunity pass without registering his decided opinion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that when any money for that purpose was moved in a committee of supply, the right hon. baronet would have an opportunity, if he thought fit, to move an Address to his Majesty against its application. There was no pledge whatever given on the part of the House, because the Address was voted, or the present motion carried, to agree to the carrying on the war in Portugal, or for any other purpose.—The motion was then agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee of supply, and resolved that a supply be granted to his Majesty.

[BREACH OF PRIVILEGE.] Mr. *Manning* rose to call the attention of the House to a species of misrepresentation of what passed there, contained in the newspapers—a misrepresentation which was certainly highly indecorous. The misrepresentation of which he complained was this:—In the Morning Chronicle newspaper for Friday last two lists of members were published, the one having this title, “A List of the 263 members of parliament who voted against pledging the House of Com-



motion to Inquiry, on the first day of the session?" The other having this title: "A List of the members who voted for Inquiry into the late disgraces and disasters." The hon. gent. stated, that his name was in the former list, the title of which, as well as that of the second, was so worded as to convey to his constituents an erroneous and unfair impression of his conduct on the occasions to which they referred. These titles tended to create the impression that he and other gentlemen in similar circumstances were hostile to inquiry altogether; than which nothing could be more erroneous. The hon. gent. then stated, that in these lists the names of the county members were particularly marked—a circumstance, which he could not but consider indecorous. He did not bring this forward at present with a view of making it as a formal complaint the subject of any specific motion, but rather for the purpose of correction and caution, which he was the more anxious for, with respect to the paper in question, as it was that which he himself took in.

Mr. *Creevey* thought that so far was it from being a breach of privilege to publish the names of members who voted on either side on any important question, that in king William's time, (not the most unfavourable period to freedom and parliamentary privilege in this country), the thing was constantly done by order of the House: and he thought such a practice highly necessary to the people of England, who would thereby be enabled to see who those representatives were who did their duty, and who did not.

Mr. *H. Lascelles* did not object to the publishing of lists of names, but to the misrepresentation of gentlemen's motives in a sweeping and general way. For instance, in one of those papers, under the head of gentlemen who voted against Inquiry, his own name was inserted; whereas he had distinctly stated in his speech on that night, that although he voted against the specific motion then in debate, no man in that House was more anxious for Inquiry than himself; and yet this part of his speech was never given as counteractive to the general statement in the list that he voted against Inquiry.

Mr. *Wilberforce* observed that it had been the usual practice to publish the names, and it was a practice which he wished should be continued. But then it ought to be conducted with some accuracy. In this respect he himself had to

complain; for of the two lists published respecting the vote on the first night of the session, his name appeared in neither; a circumstance calculated to produce the belief in his constituents, that he had not attended to his duty in that House, though he certainly always did attend, except when prevented by sickness, or some other very imperious cause. He felt this the more, because in the paper in question he was represented as having said, that the attempt to put off the motion for the inquiry into the Walcheren Expedition from Friday till after Monday, was a manoeuvre to get rid of it altogether; whereas he had got up, and distinctly disavowed any such meaning, which disavowal, however, was not mentioned. It was the more necessary to be accurate, because the characters of members with their constituents, depended very much upon the representations given of their conduct and speeches in the public papers. The want of accuracy was the more to be regretted, because he knew of no circumstance more calculated to make a man begin to balance in his mind the comparative benefits of publicity and secrecy, than the prevalence of party motives, to such a degree as to produce these misrepresentations. He, himself, certainly had reason to complain. As he belonged to no party nobody took care of him. [A laugh.] But still he had not lost the good opinion of those who sent him there, on account of those false views that might have been published of his conduct or any misrepresentations of his speeches.

Mr. *Ponsonby* remarked, that there was one thing rendered obvious by this conversation, which gave him great satisfaction, and that was the particular anxiety which was, at this time, manifested about the opinion of their constituents. That misrepresentation ought to be corrected, there was no doubt, and as little was it to be doubted that, if wilful, it justified the notice of this House: but at the same time, it was proper to remark, that the remedy was not so difficult as some seemed to imagine; for any one had the opportunity of correcting misrepresentation, if not in any other way, at least by mentioning it in the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* did not know what there was in the present state of affairs that should make it matter of so much exultation to the right hon. gent. that members should be anxious about

the opinions of their constituents; nor did he know why they should be more anxious on that subject at present than at other times. He maintained that nothing had recently passed which shewed any improper disregard of the opinions of their constituents. He then remarked, that the noticing of misrepresentations, of motives, or speeches in this way, placed the House in rather an awkward predicament. If these things were noticed at all, it ought to be as the foundation of a specific motion of complaint to the House. But, however, as one was always disposed to be as lenient as possible on these occasions, and as the hon. gent. who brought forward the subject did not press any specific proceeding, it was not incumbent on him to urge the matter farther. But he could by no means agree with the right hon. gent. who spoke last that no inconvenience would arise from the misrepresentations in newspapers of the speeches or the votes given in that House: nor could he ever assent to such a proposition as that the House was to compromise with newspaper editors or printers, and think there was no inconvenience in misrepresentation, because gentlemen might correct the mistake next day in that House. Was this the mode in which the privileges of that House were to be treated? or was a member, whose speech was misrepresented to the public and to his constituents, to be placed under the necessity of watching the newspapers, for the purpose of correcting such misstatements, and to be at the mercy of a newspaper editor, who might not think fit to notice the correction? Another hon. gent. had said, that in the time of king William, lists of the voters on great questions were published by order of the House. But would the hon. gent. feel there was any analogy between lists published under the authority of the House, and with the accuracy it had the opportunity of giving, to lists published without that authority, and fraught with error and misrepresentation? As the hon. gent. however, had made no motion on the subject, he thought it would have been more consistent with the dignity of the House not to have noticed the circumstance at all.

Mr. *Ponsonby* observed, that he had never said, that there was no inconvenience in misrepresentations. On the contrary, he said, that if wilful, they deserved punishment; but that the difficulty of correcting them was not so great as

might at first be imagined. He concluded by remarking, that nothing could be a grosser misrepresentation, than that which the right hon. gent. had made of what he had said.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was sorry that he had stated what fell from the right hon. gent., in a sense not intended, but still maintained, that the mode which he pointed out for correcting misrepresentation, was not that which best became the dignity of the House.

Mr. *Whitbread* expressed his surprise at the offence taken at the remark that members were particularly anxious at this moment about the opinions of their constituents. It had always been imputed to them, that, towards the end of the six years they were more anxious than at any previous period of their existence on that point. As to the particular subject in question, he himself might complain, when he found an editor leaving out his speech altogether, and inserting that of the right hon. gent., which was an answer to it, giving his, however, the next day. There were, unquestionably, misrepresentations; but he maintained, that, from all the papers, an accurate estimate might perfectly well be formed of the speeches and conduct of members of parliament; and as for the speeches of the honourable member for Yorkshire, they would speak for themselves, and, he believed, that they were given in a manner sufficiently accurate to convey, upon the whole, a just impression of his conduct, though he had nobody to take care of him. A more innocent breach of privilege, than that of printing speeches or names, there could not be, if properly executed. But as to the marks, or asterisks, pointing out the members who represented counties, or populous places, this could hardly be called a breach of privilege at all. During the 20 years he had sat in the House, he never saw a misrepresentation, which, on the whole, he did not think had better be let alone, than be made matter of complaint in that House, and this, certainly, was one of the very last cases of misrepresentation that ought to be visited with severity.

Mr. *Bankes* remarked, that the only proper way of correcting misrepresentation, was by notice or complaint in that House. Members could not enter into controversies with the conductors of newspapers.

The *Speaker* observed, that when an

irregular conversation about privilege took place, he did not presume to interpose, unless called upon to do so; but there must be limits to these indulgences, and he trusted the House would think it had now arrived at such limits.

[BREACH OF PRIVILEGE.—LORD COCHRANE.] MR. C. Williams Wynn rose to complain of a Breach of Privilege. In perusing the Minutes of the Court Martial upon Lord Gambier, he observed an official letter from the Admiralty to Lord Cochrane, a member of that House, which he considered as an undoubted breach of privilege. Lord Cochrane having intimated, that he intended to oppose the vote of Thanks to Lord Gambier, the Admiralty issued directions to his lordship in the letter to which he alluded, to state the grounds on which he meant to make that opposition. This, then, was a letter conveying an official direction to a member of that House to state the grounds by which his conduct in that House was to be governed. This, too, was put upon record, by warrant, upon the minutes of the Court-Martial. He did not know how there could be a more direct violation of the privileges of that House. He concluded by moving, as the ground of his complaint, for the order of the 7th of June, for trying Lord Gambier, and for the letter of the 29th of May, addressed by the secretary of the Admiralty to Lord Cochrane.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that as these papers were moved on the ground of a breach of privilege, it would not be proper to refuse them; especially, as he saw no public ground for withholding them. But, he believed, that the hon. gent. would, when the papers were produced, find it difficult to contend with success, that this was a breach of privilege. He thought, on the contrary, that nothing was more consistent and proper, than that the admiralty, finding that his lordship, who had distinguished himself so much in the attack on the French fleet in Basque roads, intended to oppose the Vote of Thanks to Lord Gambier, should desire his lordship to state his reasons for his opposition, in order to ascertain whether those were grounds for any proceedings against Lord Gambier. But he would defer his opinion till the papers were produced.—The motion was then agreed to.

[MINUTES OF LORD GAMBIER'S TRIAL.] Lord Cochrane rose, and addressed the House to the following effect:—Sir; Painful to me as it is, to present myself to the

attention of this House, on the present occasion, yet a duty which I owe to my country, demands the sacrifice of my feelings. It is incumbent on me that I should submit to this House the reasons on which I found the motion of which I have given notice, for the Minutes of the Court Martial, held on Lord Gambier. It is a document which his Majesty's ministers on a former night, did not seem inclined to grant, although absolutely necessary, in order that every member may be enabled, fairly and impartially, to decide, whether the thanks, now in the contemplation of his Majesty's ministers, are due to Lord Gambier, for the part he took, in what has been denominated, by them, a victory in Basque roads. But, as if it were unnecessary that we should judge for ourselves, it has been asserted, by the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the merits of this case have been already decided on: that the Court Martial held on the noble lord, has already proclaimed his honourable acquittal; and displayed the zeal, ability, and anxiety he manifested for the welfare of his Majesty's service. But even were all this true, Sir, and were it possible that all those facts could be ascertained, by the mere inspection of the copy of a sentence, still I contend, that the combination would not entitle an officer to the thanks of this House—the proudest honour that is in our power to bestow. We have, Sir, a right, and ought to judge for ourselves; and this we can only do, by carefully examining the Minutes of the Court Martial, before which the noble lord was tried on a very serious charge: a charge not brought against him by an individual, but by the lords commissioners of the admiralty, and grounded on official documents. Upon such documents, Sir, their lordships founded the charge “of neglect, or delay in “taking effectual means to destroy the “enemy;” and we cannot suppose that their lordships brought it without due consideration. However this may be, I submit to the House, that zeal, ability, and anxiety for the welfare of his Majesty's service, and having done nothing wrong, do not entitle any officer to our thanks, which, if bestowed on trifling, or indeed any occasion, except when marked by brilliant achievement, will dwindle into utter contempt, even with those on whom they should be conferred. They are already held lightly in the estimation of the navy, and such I freely confess is my feel-

ing respecting them. I therefore intreat this House to weigh the matter well before they come to a decision, and to consider what they are about, and the consequences of voting indiscriminately and blindfolded, that which was formerly bestowed exclusively on those, who were publicly known to have rendered the highest services to the state. The House ought to be on their guard against giving way to motions, that have such objects; as by these means, ministers might screen themselves from reprobation; and gain for a man, whose parliamentary influence they required, the highest honours they could render, however unworthy the object—I contend that to give the thanks of the House to an officer who has been tried on heavy charges, who, instead of going into action, continued at a distance not less than seven miles during the whole time, would be doing that for which no precedent could be found. I am clearly of opinion, that the Minutes of the Court Martial, which I am about to move for, are indispensably requisite; not with a view to re-consider the decision of the court; but to give foundation to our opinion respecting a matter on which we are not only entitled, but bound to decide justly; and on which the court martial could not decide for us. Indeed, sir, even in lord Gambier's written defence, we might find his lordship's pretension to our thanks, which would be some satisfaction; for in the sentence pronounced by the court, and offered as a ground, on which to rest our judgment, I protest I can find no claim. I shall go farther, Sir, and, though it is not the object to criminate, by the production of their Minutes, yet, Sir, I shall boldly assert, that the charge of delay will be found, not only to have been proved by the witnesses produced, but admitted also by his lordship's written defence; a delay of four hours elapsed, by the noble lord's own account, even before he took up the position, which he has stated to be the best, for observing the motions of the enemy, and for sending ships to the attack, and five hours afterwards elapsed before any attack was made, which is in direct opposition to the sentence delivered by the court;—if a court it can be called, when it appeared so extraordinary that the president could not give it a name, as he always spoke of it ambiguously; thus, “what may be termed,” or, “what may be called the prosecution.” Not only do I assert, Sir, that the charge has been admitted by his

lordship, and proved by witnesses; but his lordship's written defence, also, will be found to contradict itself in points on which the charge hinged, and in others of material import: that his lordship's official letters contradict that defence, and each other; and that many of the witnesses falsify their own evidence in substantive facts, and contradict themselves when deposing only to the best of their knowledge. In other instances they swear positively to things, of the truth of which they had no knowledge, which I believe is an offence against the law. The fabricated chart, Sir, will then also come under review; that chart produced by the master of the Caledonia to the court, in order to explain the various positions of the British and French fleets, “on and previous to the 12th of April,” for the purpose of inducing the members, assembled on “what may be called” the trial of lord Gambier, to believe, that no more of the French ships could have been destroyed than were destroyed, had the British force been sent in at an earlier period; although the fabricator of that chart, after having, on his first examination, sworn that it was a chart of the 12th, swears afterwards that it was meant for the 13th, inasmuch as that “the only vessels marked on the chart for the 12th, were those that had been destroyed;”—those, Sir, that did not exist.—I have one word more to say, respecting the falsity of this vile fabrication, which the master of the Caledonia professes to have copied from the Neptune François. The distance between the shoals are contracted to little more than one-third of the size of the Neptune, from which, as I have already remarked, it is declared to have been taken, in order to shew (for there can be no other reason) that the space for anchorage, as deposed by the masters, without knowledge of the fact, was confined; the water round it shoal, and the passage narrow; and that the British ships must have been within point blank range, “not only of the destructive broadsides of the two ships afloat, but of the upright ones on shore, and of the tremendous batteries of Aix, which, separately or united,” according to the testimony given, in support of the assertions of lord Gambier, must have demolished every vessel “locked up in so confined an anchorage.” Though at the same time, and for the safety, I suppose, of his Majesty's ships, that might have been sent in, in defiance of “such unwarrantable peril,” the vessels aground

are removed, by the contriver of the chart, from "the NW part of the Palles shoal, the NW part nearest the deep water flanking the passage," where, he had sworn, they were situated, and which was the fact, to the SE side of the shoal, farthest from the deep water, and beyond the Tonnère, which was not within range; and "where they never could have been approached by our ships for the shot to reach them." This, Sir, is not all: by Stokes's deposition, the Cassard, one of the ships that would have raked us with such terrible effect, is stated, and in truth it was so, to have been about one-third of a mile from Aix, and the Foudroyant, another of them, about three cables' length from her; but, Mr. Stokes, in his chart, has cunningly put them in a corner, between two shoals, and close to both, where, he has sworn, they could not be got at, though he had positively sworn, first, that they could have annoyed us, and next, that he did not know the distance between the shoals. I have already asserted, Sir, that contradictions of facts, on which the charge was founded, are frequent in the defence of lord Gambier; but I have yet to tell this House, that these contradictions, in substantive facts, are, in several, nay, many instances, confirmed, sometimes one way, and sometimes in another, by the same individual witnesses, examined in behalf of "what may be termed" the defence.—For instance: by some of those witnesses it is said, that the Cassard, Foudroyant, and some of the grounded ships, would have fired with complete effect on the British ships, had they been sent earlier to attack them; and, again, that we never could have got near them for the shot to reach.—Assertions that are, in the nature of things, incompatible; as in positive contradiction to each other, and given in support of lord Gambier's statements, that three out of the seven ships aground on the Palles were never within reach of any of the fleet that might have been sent in to attack them; and, that the other four of the eleven were never in a situation to be assailed, after the fire-ships failed in their main object; although at another time the noble lord declared, that some of those very ships would have raked our ships had they been sent in earlier than they were. I therefore call on the House to insist on the production of the Minutes of the Trial, and I pledge myself to prove, to the conviction of this House, and to my country, all that I have as-

serted. I will also prove partiality on the part of the court, and illegal and unjust conduct on the part of the judge advocate, who admitted, and even courted, evidence on one side, which he rejected on the other; and urged inquiry into the conduct of officers, whose conduct the court were not empowered to investigate, in order that he might, by insinuations, (for there could be no other motive,) create an unmerited prejudice against me by shewing that their conduct had been arraigned by me, and so induce them to unite against me, and make common cause with the Commander in Chief, who had stepped forward, as he insinuated, to vindicate their injured characters, and examined his secretary on the subject. One instance may, of the many which I could adduce, well suffice, in relation to the conduct of the learned Judge Advocate: Asked, on a certain occasion, by the President, "Is that evidence?" he answered, I should think it is. And, why, Sir, did he think so? "because it was to affect the evidence of Lord Cochrane; in that point of view he thought it was legal evidence," although I had not even touched on the subject then under consideration. As to the Court, their conduct is too glaring to admit of a doubt, as to the motives by which they were actuated. Conversations between officers, and questions framed upon matter arising out of such conversations: were admitted, notwithstanding, Sir, my testimony had been refused, in an instance, wherein I merely stated, that the opinion I had at the moment delivered to the Court, had formerly been given in the presence of certain officers, and, Sir, I submit to you, and to the learned gentlemen in this House, that such reference was admissible, as it was to establish that, by having said at a former time what I then stated, I was consistent with myself. The Judge Advocate pursued the same course, he received documents as evidence, which could not be authenticated, and on the other side, rejected those that could. Amongst the latter, was captain Woolf's order to supersede me in the inner anchorage; though the secretary who wrote it, and captain Woolf who received it, were witnesses before the Court; but, had that paper been established, I will tell you, Sir, what it would have proved; it would have proved, that it had been written together with lord Gambier's two letters of recall, on the 13th, although the signal, to the same

effect, had been attempted to be denied, and witnesses examined to support assertion against his acts. I shall not detain the House longer than to pledge myself by every thing that is valuable to man, if these Minutes are granted, to prove, though that is not immediately the intention of calling for them, not only that injustice and partiality on the part of the court has been exercised towards me, not only that the judge advocate, the expounder of the law, pointed his decisions from the course of justice; but, Sir, that the defence is contradicted by itself, contradicted by his lordship's official letters, and by his own witnesses, many of whom, as to substantive facts, are at variance with themselves and each other; and lastly, that the chart of the positions of the enemy's ships on the 12th of April, a most material point, is false, and in every respect a foul fabrication. This, and all that I have said, I pledge myself to prove to the conviction of the world, if the Minutes of the court are laid before this House. Or, if I fail, then, Sir, let contempt and merited infamy follow me; then Sir, unworthy of the honour, which his Majesty was graciously pleased to confer upon me, I shall resign it back into his hands, and vacate my seat in this House. I do not desire to get off with nominal responsibility, and I wish his Majesty's ministers could give such a pledge for their actions and for their statements.—I now move, Sir, "That there be laid before this House, a copy of the Minutes of the Trial of admiral lord Gambier, held on board his Majesty's ship the *Gladiator*, in Portsmouth harbour, on the 23rd of July 1809. Also the original Minutes taken day by day by the deputy judge advocate."

Sir Francis Burdett seconded the motion. On the question being put,

Captain Beresford said, he could not content himself with giving a silent vote on the present question. The noble lord who made the motion had, in his opinion, cast a severe reflection on the court and on the witnesses. He knew every member of that Court Martial; and he believed they were officers of as high honour and character as the noble lord. He also knew the witnesses; and he believed them in the highest degree worthy of credit. He himself had been a very strong witness against what had been done by lord Cochrane. (A cry of order!) He begged pardon: he found he had unintentionally transgressed a rule of the

House in mentioning the name of a member;—it was owing to want of experience of parliament, he had much rather be at sea he could assure them, than speaking in that House. (A laugh.) He had said on the Court Martial what he then repeated; that had lord Gambier acted as the noble lord who made the motion wished him to do, he would have disgraced himself, and our ships would have been on shore. The noble lord had forgot how he formed his charts and log-books in favour of the evidence to be adduced before the Court Martial. He hoped the House would do him the justice to believe that he was actuated by no motive but a sense of public duty; in thus declaring his sentiments and in opposing the motion of the noble lord.

Sir John Orde spoke nearly as follows:—Mr. Speaker, I cannot content myself with giving a silent vote on a question that so materially affects the vital interest of the profession to which I have the honour to belong. Sir, I do not comprehend the object of the noble mover in calling for those Minutes to be produced to this House. Is it the intention to try lord Gambier again, or to put the members of the Court Martial on their defence, who had been appointed to try his lordship? If it is, what, in God's name, would be the situation of officers in the navy? If these are not the objects, what then are they? It has been said, that the Minutes might justify the acquittal of lord Gambier on a charge for life or death, yet that they might shew him not to be entitled to the thanks of this House;—surely, Sir, an investigation of them for this purpose would savour more of persecution than of justice. Lord Gambier's conduct, in the affair of Basque-road, has already been investigated before two competent tribunals;—first, before the board of admiralty; and, secondly, by a court martial, composed, I will venture to say, although not acquainted with all its members, of as honourable men as any country or any service can boast. To try his lordship after this, or here to try the merits of the court martial, I think would be as unjust as injurious to the service; and consequently I shall give my vote against producing the Minutes, unless some reasons shall be offered in support of the motion very different from any yet submitted, or any that I can anticipate.

General Loft called upon the House to consider well what they were about, be-

fore they assented to the noble lord's motion; for nothing could more injuriously affect the discipline both of the army and navy than that parliament should take into its hands the revision of the proceedings of Courts Martial.

Mr. *Lysleiton* agreed with the hon. general, that the House ought not to take upon itself the revision of such sentences on light grounds; but still the proceedings Courts Martial were liable to revision in the House, as the court of dernier resort. This doctrine was laid down in Mr. Adye's book on Courts Martial; and there was an instance of such revision in 1744, when the sentence of a Court Martial on capt. Norris was decided by this House to be partial, arbitrary, and unjust. Besides, there might be in the Minutes of the evidence abundance of matter to justify the House in withholding the high honour of their thanks, though no actual blame may have been incurred by the noble admiral.

Mr. *Murray* observed, that it had been argued by ministers, and he thought justly, on two late occasions, that the House ought not to come to any vote till they had the papers before them, as this would be a kind of censure, and without documents. The very same arguments applied to this case; and it appeared to him equally necessary that the Minutes should be produced, before they could come to a Vote of Thanks. This also he conceived equally necessary to the character of lord Gambier himself, and to his deriving any satisfaction from a Vote of Thanks.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he did not rise to negative, but to amend the motion of the noble lord. As to the question which was to follow, namely, the Vote of Thanks to lord Gambier, it might be necessary to produce the Sentence of the Court Martial, but there was no occasion for the Minutes. In the two instances cited by the hon. gent. who had just sat down, of ministers having asked the House to wait for information, there was a very material difference from the present question; and it did not require the acuteness and distinctness of judgment so peculiar to that hon. gent. to point it out. In the case of last night, a subject was before the House which they could each of them easily determine on his own knowledge; but in this case, an investigation had already taken place, before a tribunal competent to the subject; and certainly the House would not think of calling for the Minutes, in order to question the conduct of

the individual who had been acquitted, though they might, if it was thought necessary, do so with respect to the court itself. The noble lord had stated that the House should be cautious how they countenanced such a proceeding as a Vote of Thanks to lord Gambier, because ministers might be able to shelter themselves from blame, for appointing an officer from parliamentary interest. He, for his own part, did not know of any parliamentary interest possessed by lord Gambier. If, however, any thing could shew that ministers were not guided by parliamentary interest, in their appointments of officers, he thought he might fairly instance the appointment of the noble lord himself. The noble lord had complained that there was no prosecutor on this court martial. If the noble lord had thought any prosecutor necessary in it, he should himself have been that person, since it was in consequence of his declaration, that the admiralty had thought it due, in justice to the character of lord Gambier, to institute a court martial, to inquire into the conduct, which the noble lord who made the motion, had so obliquely censured by the letter, which he had written, expressing his intention to oppose the Vote of Thanks, and in that referring to the log books of the fleet. Under all these circumstances, he hoped and trusted, that the House would, when a Vote of Thanks should be moved to an officer who had achieved a great service to his country, distinguish his merits by agreeing to that motion. He concluded, by moving as an amendment, that the word "Minutes" in the original motion be left out, and the word "Sentence" be inserted in its stead.

Sir *F. Burdett* observed, that the preceding speakers had saved him the trouble of proving the right of the House to interfere with the sentence of a court martial. The question therefore now related solely to the propriety of such an interference in the present case. If to prove the propriety of such an interference he would wish to cite an extreme case it would be the present. The noble lord had pledged his character in the most explicit manner, that, if the Minutes were produced, he would prove that the court martial had acted partially, and that lord Gambier was not deserving the thanks that were intended to be moved in his favour; and he thought it was impossible to believe the noble lord would do so, without being able to fulfil what he had promised. The right

hon. gent. opposite had said, that the House should be contented with the Sentence; that, however, was what the noble lord complained of, and it seemed, there were things connected with it which could only be properly explained by the Minutes. In looking cursorily over the Minutes this morning, he thought there were some things which appeared to be against lord Gambier. The right hon. gent. had taunted his noble colleague with not having been the prosecutor of lord Gambier; but his noble colleague certainly did not deserve to be so treated. He had no wish to bring him to a court martial. He felt and thought that lord Gambier had not done all he might have done; and when he found that he was to be rewarded by a vote of thanks, he thought it but justice to his own character to oppose such a motion; and with a candour which did him honour, he gave ministers notice of his intention. The noble lord, his colleague, had said, that lord Gambier had delayed sending in ships to support him. Lord Gambier himself allowed, that a lapse of time had taken place. If there was any distinction between the charge and the admission, lord Gambier's was the strongest. A lapse of time, he feared, was a lapse of victory. It was a lapse of a tide. The old proverb said, that "time and tide waited for no man." Lord Gambier thought they would; but he found himself mistaken. The noble lord his colleague, was appointed to conduct the attack; appointed by the admiralty for that purpose, and his orders should have been obeyed as the commander in chief. Lord Gambier's principal concern seemed to have been to preserve the fleet. If lord Nelson, at the battle of the Nile, or in that glorious action in which he lost his life, had acted on this principle, he would never have been crowned with the laurels he so bravely won, nor would the thanks of that House, and the honours of his sovereign, have so eminently and gloriously distinguished him. Lord Gambier's plan seemed to be a desire to preserve his Majesty's fleet; that of his noble colleague was to destroy that of the enemy. He had never heard that the articles of war held out an instruction to preserve the fleet. The general view of gallant officers was to obtain victory.—As to lord Gambier, he never heard he had pretended to have done any important or signal service on this occasion: his only merit seemed to consist in what he had omitted

to do. That omission might, indeed, have been wise and prudent; but could never be the object of a vote of thanks. Ministers had, however, convicted themselves; they had advised his Majesty to honour his noble colleague with a red ribbon, and to agree to the amendment of the right hon. gent. and to vote the thanks of that House to lord Gambier, would be in fact to strip him of all its value. How came ministers to appoint the noble lord, and approve so highly of all he had done. If they gave a vote of thanks to lord Gambier, they would do injustice to his noble colleague. In the Minutes it appeared that his noble colleague made a signal for assistance at five o'clock in the morning, and none was given till two in the afternoon. The shoals and batteries had not been removed; they remained the same as in the morning; and if there was any danger in them, it was not greater in the morning than it was in the afternoon. Our ships were as likely to suffer from them at the one time as the other. Under these circumstances he thought it necessary the Minutes should be produced. It had been done in the case of colonel Cawthorne, which was of infinitely less importance to the public. He should conceive therefore he did not do his duty if he did not support the motion made by his noble colleague.

Mr. Yorke said, the question was not as to the right of the House to call for the Minutes, but whether it was necessary to do so under the circumstances of the case. This was not, as the hon. bart. had represented it, a case where the noble lord came forward, and stated reasons, as consisting with his own knowledge, for withholding the vote of thanks from lord Gambier; but, on the contrary, one where, in consequence of insinuations thrown out by the noble lord, a court martial had already been held on lord Gambier, and he had been honourably acquitted; the charge, or rather insinuation, thrown out against him being totally unfounded. He regretted the noble lord should esteem it a part of his duty to adopt the part he had taken after the decision of that court martial, on which all the evidence was wholly at variance with his ideas. He regretted that a gallant officer, who, undoubtedly, had rendered great service to his country, should have esteemed it necessary to set up his own opinion and experience against the opinion and experience of so many others. The hon. bart. was



wrong in supposing that the noble lord was charged with the enterprise ; whereas, on the second day, Captain Bligh, and the other captains of the line of battle ships, were those who performed the service. He was surprised the worthy baronet should say that the noble lord went to that attack unsupported, and that having the command that day, he made a signal which should have been honoured, but was not. That signal was only a communication to the commander in chief, as to which he was to form his judgment, and most of the officers in the fleet agreed it would have been a most extraordinary thing if he had acted upon it.

Mr. C. W. Wynn did not deny that there might be cases in which the House might feel itself called on to interfere, even in cases of court-martial. Here, however, all the evidence was on one side, and opposed to it the solitary opinion of the noble lord. Had the noble lord stood uncontradicted, he might have called on the House to interfere ; but this was not a case of that kind. The blame here seemed to be in the admiralty ever directing the court martial. They ought to have known that there was no charge ; for when they applied to the noble lord for his charge, if he had any, he referred them to the Log books which it was their duty already to have perused, and which, therefore, they must by that time have been prepared to say, instead of referring blame, warranted them in bestowing thanks. He was sorry to see the thanks of that House bestowed with too little consideration, so as greatly to lower the value of that distinguished honour. He should hardly have thought this a case in which they ought to have been granted, were it not that their now withholding them might seem to countenance the present charge.

Mr. Wilberforce thought if the House wanted any additional inducement to vote their thanks to the noble lord, they had them in the words of the sentence of the court martial. The present motion was peculiarly important, as it went to throw a gross stigma on the characters of the whole of the members of the court martial, as if they were totally ignorant of their profession, and forgetful of their own reputation and of the cause of truth and justice. All the evidence, however, was one way. If the sentence had been conceived in dry or doubtful terms, then the House might have called for the Mi-

nutés. That, however, was not the case ; and all that remained for the House to suppose was, that the noble lord (Cochrane) thought differently from every person else at the time of the court martial, and that he did so still. Lord Gambier had formerly shewn that he could dare when he ought to dare, having been the first to break the line on the glorious first of June ; and now he had shewn that he was no less capable of performing important service without exposing to unnecessary risk the ships or subjects of his Majesty.

Lord Newark saw no just ground for the present motion. It carried with it a serious matter of charge against the members of the court martial, and almost every witness who had been examined, and that, too, on a subject in which the noble lord would not find one man in the profession to agree with him.

Sir C. Hamilton said, if his information was correct, the fault that more damage had not been done to the enemy's fleet, lay with the noble lord (Cochrane) himself ; and if the Minutes of the court martial were produced, he should engage to bring evidence to that effect before the House. If the noble lord had followed the advice of a senior officer, in reserving some of his fire ships, he would have been able to destroy all the ships of the enemy. When with the explosion ship the noble lord gave the signal, those who observed his orders did not succeed ; and those who did not observe the signal, but were more deliberate in their proceedings, were successful. Those officers who disobeyed the order to fire the ships had been promoted, and those who obeyed the order had not been promoted.

Mr. Croker said, that he had endeavoured to follow the noble lord in his speech, but could not bring him to any one point. The noble lord would have done no more than his duty, if he had been in possession of those circumstances which he had detailed this night, in making them the subject of proceedings against Lord Gambier. What, however, had been the conduct of the noble lord ? On the contrary, instead of making a direct charge, he had merely contented himself with referring the admiralty board to the log-book of his own ship for information. The board of admiralty therefore in acceding to the wish of the noble lord, for an enquiry into his conduct with respect to the attack on Basque Roads, had done

him no more than an act of justice.—No man was more disposed than he was to respect the noble lord (Cochrane) for his private virtues and public conduct, but he could not think that the House was bound to throw a slur upon the sentence of the court-martial, by calling for their Minutes in compliment to the opinion of the noble lord who had called for them. Was the House aware of the merits and services of many of the members of the court-martial? Was not sir R. Curtis an old and meritorious officer, who had served his country before the noble lord was born? Was not sir John Duckworth another gallant officer? Was not admiral Young an officer of high and distinguished character? Were not admiral Campbell (a member of that House) and all the other admirals and captains of the court-martial, men of high and deserved professional repute? The opinions of these officers, with all his partiality to his noble friend, he felt himself bound to prefer to those of his noble friend. Yet the noble lord wished the united opinions of so large a body of the officers of the navy to pass for nothing, and that the House of Commons should receive his as the only just opinion. He was sorry to be obliged to say that the noble lord had constrained him to declare, that, having put his character against the majority of his profession, he was bound to adhere to the majority in preference to the noble lord, however highly he estimated his talents, and to vote against his motion.

Mr. *Whitbread* thought the noble lord did wrong in returning any answer to the application of the Admiralty. He ought to have told them that, as a member of the House of Commons, he had no answer whatever to make: and if they had thought the logs inconclusive, why did they not manfully come down and try the question in that House. The hon. gentleman talked of the injustice of trying an officer in that House. Must not the merits of every officer be inquired into when it is proposed to confer on him a Vote of Thanks? Was he not then on his trial? Was not this a species of trial to which every officer, before he could receive the high honour of the thanks of parliament necessarily must be exposed? But, after a court-martial, which ought never to have taken place, had declared lord Gambier to be honourably acquitted, did it follow, as a matter of necessity, that they must grant him the thanks of

that House? He presumed that by no means followed. Then what was the situation to which the House was reduced? The noble lord had committed himself more than he had ever heard man do in that House to prove his statements respecting the conduct of lord Gambier. And now another member had come forward, and said that the noble lord himself (Cochrane) had not properly executed the duty entrusted to him, and that if he had done so, he might have done far more injury to the enemy's ships.—The hon. bart. (Hamilton) had said, that, at the time when he (lord Cochrane) was in the command, and made signals to the vessels employed under him, some of them obeyed and others disobeyed the instructions they received, and that those who disobeyed were ultimately successful, while those who obeyed at the moment failed. The worthy baronet also added, that those who disobeyed the signal given them were promoted, while those who obeyed it were not. What must become of the subordination necessary for the support of our navy, if our officers were to be informed that it could be possible, in any one instance, that those who obeyed the instructions of their superior officer were to be passed by, while those who disobeyed his signals might expect to be promoted? From the disagreeable situation in which the House was now placed, on both sides, he thought they must unavoidably have the Minutes.

Mr. *Ponsonby* could not agree to vote for the motion of the noble lord, and for this reason, because the adoption of it would be a violation of one of the most sacred and fundamental principles of the jurisprudence of England. My lord Gambier had been tried by a competent jurisdiction, and acquitted. He could therefore scarcely imagine any thing more dangerous to the lives, property, and liberties of Englishmen, than that a man should be tried a second time for the same imputed offence. Could a man who, for any offence, had been put on his trial in another place, and acquitted, be again tried for the same offence? Certainly not. If a man was accused of the highest crime the law takes cognizance of, viz. conspiring with others to murder the King, and should be acquitted; if it should turn out afterwards that other circumstances than had been adduced on the trial could be proved, was it to be endured that he should be again tried? He could not be

tried again; the principles of the constitution forbid it. If that were the only reason which he had to induce him to object to the production of the Minutes, he should give his vote against the motion, but in his opinion the motion was highly objectionable as it went further as went wholly to subvert the discipline of the navy. What was the object of the noble lord's motion? Why this, that lord Gambier having been tried and acquitted by a competent jurisdiction, the noble lord came to parliament, and required that his opinion should be taken as sufficient authority for reversing the verdict which the court had given in favour of the noble lord. If this mode of proceeding was to be tolerated, how could any naval officer be safe who might have been tried and acquitted? The noble lord had said, that this House had the power of punishing judges who did not act properly. It was true the House had that power, as had been shewn in some cases, in the case of the Ship Money, and others, wherein it had been proved that they had acted in direct violation of the law. In the present case there was not any allegation of the kind—there was no charge against the judges; the House was desired upon the single opinion of one of the witnesses examined before them, to reverse their decree. It was scarcely to be conceived, that twelve members of a Court Martial would set their hands to a sentence of acquittal such as the one alluded to, who were ignorant of the evidence. They had not merely pronounced him not guilty, but described him as a meritorious officer in the Sentence. He trusted the House would not be disposed to think that any grounds were laid for agreeing to the motion.

Lord *Cochrane* then addressed the House in reply, as follows;—Mr. Speaker; Some remarks that have fallen from gentlemen on both sides of the House, call upon me for explanation.—And first the hon. gent. below me, has asserted, that it was my bounden duty to have brought forward, myself, charges against lord Gambier, if I thought his conduct censurable.—I must tell that hon. gent., that I adopted the mode that, under such circumstances it was my duty to adopt. I did not presume to frame charges founded on my own opinion, of the transactions that had passed in Basque roads.—I did not deliver charges: but when I found that a vote of thanks was to be pressed on this House,

I felt myself called upon to refer their lordships to the log books and minutes of signals, where they would find reasons, why a vote of thanks should not be granted to the commander in chief, and their lordships found them, in these official documents, which are received, as evidence, in all courts of law. These, Sir, I had no power to falsify, and to these I referred, not with a wish maliciously to criminate, but to save this House, and my country, from what I felt would be a disgrace. As this book has been used (*Guernsey's Minutes*) I shall, if permitted, read the opinion of the lords commissioners of the Admiralty, founded, I suppose, on mature deliberation. "And whereas by the log books and minutes of signals of the *Caledonia*, *Imperieuse*, and other ships employed on that service, it appears to us, that the said admiral lord Gambier, on the 12th day of the said month of April, the enemy's ships being then on shore, and the signal having been made that they could be destroyed, did, for a considerable time, neglect or delay taking effectual measures for destroying them: We therefore in compliance with his lordship's request, and in consequence of what appears in the said log books and minutes of signals, think fit that a Court Martial shall be assembled for the purpose of examining into his lordship's conduct, and trying him for the same." Such was the charge brought against his lordship by the board of admiralty, after investigating the log books of the *Caledonia* and of the fleet. No individual had the power to mislead their lordships; and this I submit to the House was the fair and honourable mode to proceed. It was regular, and not liable to be affected by prejudice or my opinions.—I had another reason for this line of conduct; I did not chuse to oppress my mind with responsibility: I believe admiral Byng was called to an account not by an individual but by his country. I trust, Sir, this explanation will be satisfactory to the House, and to the hon. gent. who chose to reprobate my conduct. I have now a word or two to say to the naval member opposite, who has spoken of forming logs for the purpose of evidence. When he throws out insinuations, or rather accusations such as these, it would be but honourable in him, and justice demands that he should state the difference, which was detected in these logs. Lord Gambier, who was pretty much alive to detect errors, did point out

"that in one, the signal made, was that half the fleet could destroy" the enemy, and in the other, that it stood, "part of the fleet can destroy the enemy." What Sir, is the mighty difference between part and the half, a part may be either more or less, or exactly the half of the fleet. Is this the error which the hon. gent. has spoken of, or is it the circumstance of my hailing the *Indefatigable* which is not noticed in one, but inserted in the other. That, Sir, was a personal act of my own; the words spoken had nothing to do with the transactions usually inserted in the log books of ships. Those who were on board can vouch for the correctness of the fact. As to the chart, I must address a few words more to the same gentleman, and state to this House, and pledge myself to prove if the Minutes are granted, that my chart is correct and is corroborated as to every point for which it was produced by the testimony of the master of the *Caledonia*, who after falsifying his own chart swears that the French ships lay, exactly, as I placed them. And here, Sir, I shall give a specimen of the evidence of those ingenious gentlemen the inventors of the fabricated chart, which was introduced for three reasons, to shew the confined state of the anchorage, the point blank shot of the batteries of Aix, and that no more of the enemy's ships could have been got at, than those that were destroyed. In all these points, I pledge myself to prove the chart produced by the master of the *Caledonia* false, by the mouths of its fabricators themselves, and here is their evidence. First as to the space in the anchorage. Mr. Fairfax, on being asked, "Is it much confined and the waters round it shoal?"—*A.* "The space is much confined."—*Q.* "Is the navigation of Aix roads difficult for large ships as far as you know?"—*A.* "Very much so."—*Q.* "Did you know previous to the 12th of April, of any anchorage above the Boyart-shoal and near the Palles shoal, for line of battle ships out of range of the enemy's shells?"—*A.* "I knew of no anchorage."—*Q.* "Have you acquired a knowledge of any such since?"—*A.* "I have not."—*Q.* "Were you in the road of Aix, after the British ships were placed for the purpose of attacking the enemy?"—*A.* "No." So much for this gentleman's knowledge of that to which he positively swears.—Now, Sir; let us see Mr. Stokes's evidence on this head. "He does not know the distance between the sands

from his own soundings," yet he positively swears that "the space for anchorage is much confined, and the water round it shoal, that it is difficult for large ships, and that the channel is very narrow."—Why, Sir, even by his fabricated chart, which he says he copied from the *Neptune François*, the channel is a mile wide, and neither bank or shoal between where our fleet lay and the *Cassard* and *Foudroyant*, which he has very injuriously contrived to put in a corner, a mile distant from Aix, though in his evidence he swears they were only one third of the distance, and here is his deposition.—"The *Cassard* and *Foudroyant* both lay afloat, the *Cassard* one third of a mile from Aix, the *Foudroyant* three cables length astern of her."—The reason, Sir, for making a corner between two shoals, and putting them in it, was to prevent the possibility of getting under their sterns and between them and the ships on shore, which, Mr. Stokes has sworn, "lay on the Western part of the Palles shoal, the three decker on the north west edge of the Palles shoal, with her broadside flanking the passage, the N. W. part nearest to the deep water," although in his fabricated chart he has transported them from the N. W. part nearest to the deep water, to the S. E. side farthest from the deep water beyond the *Tonnere*, where he says they "never could have been got at for the shot to reach." This chart, it is affirmed by Mr. Stokes, is taken from the *Neptune*, but the space is contracted to about one third of its size. For what reason, Sir, could this be done, but to induce a belief of the "unwarrantable peril," to which his Majesty's ships would have been exposed. Mr. Stokes confessed on his examination his ignorance of the distance between the sounds, and yet presumed to deliver to the court a chart, not, of the scale of the *Neptune François*, of which, it professed to be a copy. And to crown all, Sir, after having sworn that it was a chart, of the positions of the enemy's ships, on, and previous to the 12th April, he, on a subsequent day, when asked by the president, who observed that "the *Ocean* was not marked on the 12th, she was marked on the 13th," afterwards positively swears that the only ships marked on this fool fabrication, "are the ships that were destroyed." Yet inadvertently several officers have spoken to this chart as correct, and some have even deposed, that

it was impossible to pass under the stern of the *Foudroyant*, between her and the bank, although, she was seven miles from them, and the bank, from nine, to thirteen feet, under water. I trust, Sir, this is sufficient, all this I can prove to the world by the testimony given by the witnesses themselves. Another naval member opposite has offered to prove a fact which, he must do me the justice to own, is not within his own knowledge—That I was to blame for the failure of the fire ships; and he states, first, that the explosion vessel was a signal to the fire ships, and next, that she was improperly exploded. Now, Sir, this gives me an opportunity to remark again on the conduct of the court. How rigorous, as to the law on one side, and how lax on the other. Lord Gambier, too, has asserted that, which the hon. gent has undertaken to prove, but his lordship did not prove it, and I will tell the House why he did not prove it, because the explosion vessel was no signal to the fire ships. Orders written out by me, were delivered by lord Gambier in the cabin of the *Caledonia*, directing quite the contrary—Ordering them to use their discretion as to the time when they were to be kindled, and had the state of the weather rendered it practicable to couple them together, the senior officer of each division of four, was to shew a lantern, or a false fire, to direct, whether the long or short fuses were to be kindled.—And an acknowledgment of the delivery of these orders will be found in lord Gambier's official letter, I think of the 10th of May. The court, however, refused to receive this document which I offered to them, because they said it was not relevant to the charge, although the court had not only suffered lord Gambier to make the assertion, but had themselves examined several witnesses to the point. So far, Sir, from the explosion having been a signal for the fire ships to kindle, the fire ships were, by their written orders, to go in, in three divisions, each half a mile apart, and the explosion vessels half a mile a head of them. Thus much for the signal, and for the impartiality of the court. Now, Sir, as to the place in which the vessel exploded; and Mr. Fairfax, one of the fabricators of the chart, is the only person examined to this point; he, Sir, notwithstanding that he has sworn that she blew up within two cables length of the *Lyra*, has a remark a little unfortunate, on a chart or in a

letter, I do not remember which, in the *Naval Chronicle*. (I think of July :) "the French frigate (*F.*) cut or slipped before the fire ships got to where they were set fire to;" the fact is, Sir, the explosion vessel blew up close to her.—I submit to this House—many of the members are military men, and all are capable to judge of the fact, whether one hundred barrels of powder, covered with shells, and at least a thousand grenades, would not have destroyed the *Lyra*, if exploded, within two cables length. The court, indeed, asked Mr. Fairfax "where he was when she blew up," and he answered, "In the *Lyra*."—In the *Lyra*, Sir, was his answer; the court did not put a question on the Minutes, Was you on deck in the *Lyra*? If I could make use of notes which I had taken, I might submit also to this House, whether a man who was below, at the explosion of the first part of 100 barrels of powder, could get on deck to see the second part exploded. Lord Gambier's defence was full of accusations against me. Evidences were examined to prove these, though they did not relate in any way to the charge, and I was not suffered to ask one single question to refute them, or to be present when the defence was read. Sir, I was even sent out of Court, and denied the privilege of hearing it, although when an evidence on the late trial of a member of this House, I was sent for.—If, Sir, there were no other reasons for the production of the Minutes which I have called for, but that I am now put upon my defence: that accusations are made, which, in justice to my feelings, and my character, I must refute, I humbly submit to this House, that in justice to me they ought now to be produced, and I trust, Sir, that for reasons more important to the country they will not be refused; that this House will not shut their eyes and go blindfold to the vote. If so, the country must—will not follow their example. Sir, I shall not detain the House longer than to re-assert all that I have pledged myself to prove, and stake every thing that is valuable to man on the issue. If the Minutes are granted, I shall expose such a scene, as will, perhaps, make my country tremble for its safety. I intreat the House well to consider, that there is a tribunal to which it is answerable, that of posterity, which will try all our actions, and judge impartially.

Mr. *Tierney* thought it would be wrong for that House to disturb the past acts of

justice. He could not persuade himself to suspect any degree of partiality in the tribunal which tried lord Gambier. But the question was not as to the noble lord's innocence, but as to his claim to a most distinguishing reward. The honours of the House were high things—dear and valuable; but dear only because they implied merit—valuable only because even that merit must be rare. Honours, too frequently bestowed, lost their value, and became signs of nothing but the weakness which lavished them, or the worthlessness on which they were to be thrown away. In this case there was no apparent service to be traced which was worthy of their thanks. He would vote for the Minutes, but in his vote he begged to be understood, as merely calling for matter to enable him to shape his opinion. He could mean no slight to lord Gambier. He respected his lordship's character. He had some opportunities of hearing him spoken of, and it was always in a high strain of praise and estimation. But he had never understood that lord Gambier took any share of the merit of the achievement to himself. He had not approached the French fleet nearer than seven miles. Ministers had praised lord Gambier for his discretion: he hoped they had not intended this as an instance in their enumeration of its proofs. It became the House to be cautious of being prodigal of the honours which were entrusted to their distribution. The noble lord near him (lord Cochrane) ought to be heard; his judgment and character, his signal gallantry and signal honours, deserved the serious attention of the House. Even his feelings, led, as they were perhaps, astray by an excess of strength and sensibility, deserved all the attention which could be paid to them.

Mr. Lyttleton felt himself called on to explain his former opinion. He had reminded the House of a precedent for the revision of courts martial; but in stating this fact he merely wished to bring a new authority in support of the privileges of that assembly. He conceived that the sentence of a naval court was not in the full sense of the word, definitive. In the military law, an appeal lay from a court martial to his Majesty's courts at Westminster; he concluded that there must be found a similar check on a court of naval officers. In voting for the motion he pledged himself to nothing; he had not yet found materials for his opinion, and he was satisfied to pause till he had found them.

The question was now called for; and, upon a division, there appeared—

For the Amendment - - - - 171

Against it - - - - - 19

Majority against lord Cochrane's

Motion - - - - - 152

[VOTE OF THANKS TO LORD GAMBIER.]

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, in pursuance of his notice, rose to propose a Vote of Thanks to lord Gambier for his eminent services in destroying the French fleet in the Basque roads. In doing this he conceived it would be unnecessary for him to take up much of the time of the House in detailing the services which the noble lord had performed, as from the nature of the debate just concluded, they were in possession of every information they could desire. He might fairly anticipate that the House having judged it inexpedient to produce the Minutes of the court martial, would not be anxious to listen to any arguments in support of the motion which he was about to submit. It had, however, been stated by some gentlemen, that the nature of the service was not such as to justify the House to vote its thanks to the noble lord. But when the nature of that service was known and considered, it was impossible that the House could come to any other conclusion than a Vote of Thanks. The conduct of lord Gambier on that occasion was so eminent that even those who were most disposed to object to thanks being voted on ordinary occasions, and who grounded themselves on precedent, would not find any for withholding them from commanders in chief when with the force placed under them they achieved any great service. The Sentence even of the court-martial was itself a proof that the service was performed in such a manner as to deserve thanks; he had not merely superintended the enterprize, but had, as the Sentence affirmed, conducted it with a proper regard to the interest of the state, and with peculiar zeal for the good of the service. The execution of the service deserved, therefore, peculiar notice, and he would shortly detain the House by stating some of the circumstances attending the accomplishment of it. The French fleet had escaped from Brest on the 23d of March; they were seen by admiral Stopford, who had at that time three sail of the line, and some small frigates going into Basque roads. The French fleet consisted of eight sail of the line, and several frigates. Admiral Stopford gave the sig-

mal that the enemy had escaped, and proceeded to blockade them with his small force, until he was joined by four sail more. The Rochefort squadron, consisting of three ships of the line, having joined the Brest fleet, continued to be blockaded by those seven sail, until the 11th or 12th of April, when lord Gambier having arrived, made those arrangements for the attack, which was began by the Mediator, capt. Wooldridge. There were some circumstances which he must mention with respect to this gallant officer, which the House would be glad to hear, as they reflected the greatest credit upon his gallantry. As the Mediator bore down to her station, the fuze was set on fire. At length the crew were dismissed; and the captain, with the first lieutenant and a gunner, alone remained on board. They remained not merely till they were in danger, but till they were actually blown up! The captain and his lieutenant escaped with their lives; the gunner was killed—a most noble instance of the most daring and heroic bravery. The attack, having been thus commenced on the night of the 13th successively, was followed up the next day by the noble lord (Cochrane) with peculiar gallantry; the consequence was, that no less than three sail of the line and a fifty gun ship were completely destroyed. The House therefore would not be disposed, he trusted, to refuse its thanks for eminent services when performed under such great peril and risk whilst the enemy were possessed of the protection of their own batteries, and other advantages which in harbour they could bring into play for the security of their own vessels. It was an enterprise of great and peculiar hazard and difficulty. The result had been highly injurious to the enemy, and had the effect of not only disabling, but of removing the enemy's whole squadron from the possibility of being for a considerable time available for the purposes of the naval campaign. Was not that an object of great magnitude? The fleet no doubt was destined to perform some great operation, which this service had rendered them not only incapable of accomplishing, but had entirely annihilated their whole force. Of this service in which lord Gambier had been employed, and had so successfully executed, the utmost attention had been paid to the interests of the state: not more than 20 lives had been lost, and not more than 30 or forty wounded. The right hon. gent. concluded with moving

the following Resolutions. 1. "That the thanks of this House be given to admiral the right hon. lord Gambier, for the zeal, judgment, ability, and anxious attention to the welfare of his Majesty's service, which marked his lordship's conduct as commander in chief of the fleet in Basque roads, by which the French fleet, which had taken refuge under the protection of their own batteries, were driven on shore and disabled, and a considerable part of them destroyed on the 11th and 12th of April 1809. 2. That the thanks of this House be given to rear-admiral the hon. Robert Stopford, captain sir Harry Burrard Neale, bart., captain of the fleet, and to the several captains and officers of the fleet under the command of admiral lord Gambier, for their gallant and highly meritorious conduct on that glorious occasion, particularly marked by the brilliant and unexampled success of the difficult and perilous mode of attack by fire-ships, conducted under the immediate direction of capt. lord Cochrane. 3. That this House doth highly approve of and acknowledge the services of the seamen and royal marines on board the ships under the command of admiral lord Gambier, in the late glorious and successful attack on the French fleet in Basque roads, and that the captains and commanders of the several ships do signify the same to their respective crews, and do thank them for their meritorious and gallant conduct."

On the question being put on the first Resolution,

Lord *Cochrane* warned the House, that even its verdict was not conclusive upon character; that there was another tribunal to which even that House was amenable, and that the public would exercise a judgment, if the House would not exercise one. He still required to know what part of lord Gambier's exploit deserved the thanks, or what had been his exploit. He lay at a distance; he never brought his fleet into the place of action, or of danger; and yet he was for this supineness to receive the highest honours of the country. The ground of ministers was childish and frivolous; that in truth where the subordinates deserved praise, the superiors must receive it. Was admiral Parker thanked for his bravery at Copenhagen? But the public would take the question into its own hands. The public would read the Minutes, though the House might not; the public would judge from the facts, though the House

might not; the public would not submit to have their eyes bound, because the House chose to keep theirs shut. Let a single reason for the thanks be adduced, and he was ready to vote for them. He could not condescend to call those arguments, which had already been obtruded on the House, reasons.

Sir *John Orde*. Mr. Speaker; I rise to declare my opinion, that admiral lord Gambier is as fully entitled to the thanks of this House as any commander in chief could be for the performance of a service such as that we now deliberate upon; and therefore, as thanks to his lordship have been proposed, I shall vote for them. Sir, I entertained this opinion of lord Gambier's conduct in the service alluded to before the prorogation of Parliament, and their lordships of the admiralty appeared to do the same. I could not, therefore, but much regret the cause which prevented the proposition for thanks being submitted to parliament when first intended, as at that time the service was fresh in the recollection of the community.

Sir *Francis Burdett* desired to know whether the service of lord Gambier was worthy of the thanks of parliament, admitting it to have all the value that could be attributed to it, by any thing but the unblushing and profuse spirit of ministerial favouritism. He would ask whether, on the other hand, there was not the full and decided testimony of a man adequate to give his judgment, and of whose admirable valour and good fortune the House and the nation had but one opinion. He felt that in making these remarks, he might be treading on perilous ground. He was probably bringing upon himself some charitable remarks, particularly those of a gentleman, whose charity was of a very peculiar nature. But he was careless about such remarks; he deprecated that person's charity; he would not shun, he would rather solicit his hostility. Had there been any thing said to make out a reason for the vote which was demanded of them on that night? Where was the evidence of intrepidity or skill, of that boldness which bursts its way through all obstacles; of that genius before which obstacles vanished? For all this they were only insulted with a dry catalogue of negatives, and an account that the noble admiral inspected the action at a distance of seven miles. The question had been treated lightly; but levity was unbe-

coming the grave matter for their deliberation. The subject was of great importance; and it merited to be most seriously considered.

Mr. *Windham* having doubts on the vote which he should give, would wish to state what they were, but still more strongly what they were not. He was adverse to the revival of the decisions of courts-martial; but the Vote of Thanks forced him to put himself to the trouble of thinking a little. He thought a motion for papers on such a subject was unnecessary; the thanks of that House did not deserve to be lavished on any man, unless his service was of that rank which forced itself into universal report, and universal admiration. It was not to be evolved in some obscure process of official chemistry; not to be drawn out from under bundles of obscure records; not to be elicited by any keen, cunning, recondite, subtilizing process, beyond the practice or perception of the general mass of mankind. To be praised it must be known; to be matter of thanks it must be matter of publicity. He then adverted to the instance of sir Home Popham, in which he accused the conduct of the admiralty, as taking away its effect from the sentence of a court-martial, by conferring situations of confidence on him, subsequently to his having received a reprimand. Lord Gambier never came into the action. This was admitted by all the evidence, yet this should not throw a stain upon him. It was not his place. The aspersion thrown upon him for sparing the lives of his men was idle. It was the highest praise of the first military characters that they saved blood. Great commanders hated the unnecessary waste of human lives. They were careful of their men, and it was their proudest boast that they accomplished their victories without the unnecessary expenditure of a single soldier. But in voting thanks it was time to pause. Their old rewards were become worthless. It had been said, that nothing was left but the peerage, and even the most lavish disposal of that high honour; they gave it away by two steps at once. This was the natural process where there was no distinct scale of merit and reward; but it was time to stop. They had in their hands the great provision for national virtue; they had the honours of the country intrusted to them, and it became them, as legislators, not to suffer its streams to be idly diverted, nor



to be prodigally and profusely poured forth, to slake the thirst of undeserving ambition, still panting, still insatiable.

A division then took place, and the numbers were,

For the Motion - - - - - 161

Against it - - - - - 39

Majority - - - - - —122

The other Resolutions were then passed  
*non. con.*

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Wednesday, January 31.*

[ORDNANCE DEFALCATION.] Mr. Calcraft observed, that as there were certain confident rumours afloat, that a very considerable Defalcation had been discovered in the accounts of a public officer in the Ordnance Department, he rose to enquire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether those rumours were founded; and, if so, whether the discovery was accidental; and whether the subject had been referred for further investigation to the Commissioners of Military Inquiry?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer answered, that a discovery had been made, merely by accident, that drafts had been issued to a considerable and unusual amount upon the Bank of England, by an officer in the Ordnance department. The discovery was made on a Saturday; and it was thought right to send, on the Monday morning, orders to the Bank forbidding the payment of any drafts drawn by that officer. The Board of Ordnance immediately instituted an inquiry on the subject; but no result had as yet taken place, which rendered it necessary, in their opinion, to lay any statement before the House. The officer in question, to say the least of his conduct, had acted in violation of the orders established for the regulation of his department. He had since resigned his situation; and it was found, upon the inquiry which had already been instituted, that the public were not likely to sustain any material loss. The matter was at present under minute investigation by the Board of Ordnance; and the subject would be ultimately referred, without delay, to the Commissioners of Military Inquiry.

Mr. Calvert declared himself so far satisfied with this explanation.

[EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.] Lord Porchester took occasion to ask, whether, with a view to give every possible expedition to the proposed inquiry, there was

any objection on the other side to have it carried on *de die in diem* to its conclusion? This he conceived it desirable to understand from various considerations. It would be recollected that upon a similar investigation in 1779, the progress was so slow, in consequence of frequent interruptions, that the House was actually prorogued without any report at all being made. To guard against the possibility of such an event, or against any untoward interruptions, he thought it necessary at once to settle upon some arrangement as to the course of this inquiry, either that it should go on *de die in diem*, or that particular days should be fixed for it, in order that it might not interfere with other business.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was of opinion, that it would be extremely imprudent to prescribe beforehand what course it might be deemed expedient to pursue in the prosecution of the inquiry alluded to. He apprehended that it was the general wish to get rid of it as soon as possible. But the idea of settling at once the precise days upon which it should be gone into, under any circumstances that might arise, seemed to him quite inexpedient. The discretion of the House, upon this head, must be regulated by the circumstances, which might arise in the course of the inquiry.

Mr. Tierney wished that some understanding should be established upon this subject. All his noble friend asked was, that this important inquiry should be allowed to go on without interruption unless some very pressing business should interfere. When business of that description should occur, his noble friend could, of course, have no wish to impede it. But as things now stood, his noble friend's request was one to which he could not conceive a reasonable objection. Indeed it appeared but fair that it ought to be acceded to, when it was considered that a good deal of *viva voce* evidence was to be adduced, and that some of the witnesses were to come from a considerable distance.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer repeated his objections to the arrangement alluded to. The House would be quite able to determine on Friday, whether the subject should be resumed on Monday, or any other convenient day, and, no doubt, the House would not lose any time upon this important subject. Upon Friday some debate might arise as to the course proper for the committee to pursue in prosecuting

this inquiry; but there were three distinct points to which they would naturally direct their attention; namely, the policy of undertaking the Expedition; the manner in which it was executed; and the propriety of retaining Walcheren up to the period of its evacuation. Upon each of these points the House would probably feel the propriety of establishing some specific rules for its guidance. As to the first point, for which his colleagues and himself were responsible, they would have to justify themselves, by the nature of the intelligence they received, and of the sources whence they received it, together with various circumstances, to which it would be obviously improper to give publicity, and therefore the House would, no doubt, appoint a more confined tribunal for conducting that part of the investigation. After the debate on the points he had referred to had concluded, he could not apprehend the occurrence of any other material discussion to interfere with the proposed inquiry. Certainly he should not wish to promote any such discussion. It was, he hoped, in the recollection of the House, that on a former inquiry, his endeavour uniformly was to prevent any division that might lead to delay; and he would pursue the same course in this instance.

Mr. *Tierney* stated, that he saw many other points to which it would be proper for the House to direct its inquiry, as well as those mentioned by the right hon. gent. namely, as to the time occupied in fitting out the Expedition, the manner in which it was fitted out, and the period at which it sailed. On these several heads there were various matters in circulation, which demanded inquiry. But, with regard to the first point stated by the right hon. gent. it might, no doubt, be very proper to appoint a private committee to receive an article of secret communication made to ministers, previous to the undertaking of this unfortunate Expedition. That, however, was a question which had no concern with the application of his noble friend, or with the other points referred to. Ministers were not required by his noble friend, or any one who thought with him, to publish any thing which ought to be kept secret. They were simply asked to give to the purposes of the inquiry as much of the time of the House as the necessary attention to indispensable public business would allow. It was not supposed that the promise of any individual

should bind the House. But all that was expected or required was, that general understanding, which might be consistently established, and which his noble friend's application had alone in view.

Here the conversation dropped.

[NAVY ESTIMATES.] The House, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, resolved itself into a Committee of Supply.

Mr. *Robert Ward* rose for the purpose of moving the Estimates of the Navy. The hon. gent. then moved—“That it is the opinion of the Committee that the number of seamen to be employed for the year 1810, be 130,000 men, including 31,000 marines,” which was agreed to. He next observed, that it was necessary to follow up this vote with the usual vote of wear and tear, which the Committee would recollect embraced the wages and victuals of the number of men voted. He had to observe, that the amount voted last year was 11,900,000*l.* but there would be a diminution this year to the amount of 1,000,000 and upwards. This reduction he accounted for upon two grounds; first, from a new regulation for keeping the public accounts; and secondly, from an actual diminution of expence. The first would consist in the transfer to the Army Estimates of that part of the charge for victualling garrisons upon foreign stations, and troops in transports, which had heretofore been included in the account for victualling the navy; and the second, in the total reduction of the sea fencibles. From this corps an expence had arisen to the country of about 200,000*l.* per annum: but, as the officers would be placed on half pay, the saving would be little more than half that sum. He proposed to move for the grant of 130,000 seamen, including 31,000 marines, for the service of the year 1810, at the rate of 1*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* per man per month; which was less by 1*s.* 6*d.* a month than the grant of last year. But this difference formed the sum hitherto appropriated to the maintenance of the sea fencibles. Although moving for only 130,000 seamen, the hon. member felt it his duty to observe, that, according to the last returns, there were actually 143,000 men serving in the navy. This, no doubt, formed an excess beyond the vote of parliament, which, as soon as the admiralty were apprized of it, in December last, should have been immediately communicated to the House, if it had been then sitting. Every man of common sense

must admit, that it was obviously impossible, from the distribution of our navy in various quarters of the world, and the means unavoidably resorted to for recruiting it, to guard against exceeding the vote of parliament, or even to secure a compliance with that vote. But the excess in this instance was so considerable, that it was intended to submit a distinct question to the consideration of the House, how that excess was to be disposed of and provided for: at present, he only moved for the usual vote, leaving the question open for future discussion, whether any, and what part of this excess should be retained? The policy of disbanding so large a body of men, without knowing the general state of the navy, appeared to require very serious and deliberate consideration. After some further remarks upon the new arrangement which he had described, relative to the separation of the naval and military accounts, the hon. member moved, "That the sum of 2,999,750*l.* be granted to his majesty, for the wages of the said 130,000 men, for thirteen lunar months, at the rate of 1*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* per man per month." The motion was agreed to, as were also the following: "For victualling 130,000 seamen voted for 13 lunar months at the rate of 2*l.* 17*s.* 3*d.* per man per month, 3,992,625*l.*: for wear and tear of the Navy, 3,205,500*l.*: for Naval Ordnance, 591,500*l.*

The House then resumed, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

[OFFICES IN REVERSION BILL.] Mr.

*Banks* rose in consequence of his previous notice, and moved, That the bill of last session for suspending for a limited period the granting of Offices in Reversion, be read; which being done, the hon. gent. said, when he rose the other day to give notice of his intention to move for leave to bring in a bill, to make perpetual the act which had just been read, he had not the slightest idea, that there would be anything like opposition made to it. It was with infinite surprize and concern, however, he heard his right hon. friend (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) declare it was his intention to shorten the duration of the prevention by bringing in a bill of his own for its continuance only one year longer. What reason his right hon. friend could have for taking such a course, he could not even pretend to guess; but whatever it might be, he hoped and trusted it would not operate on the mind

of the House, because he thought he could shew, beyond a possibility of contradiction, that it ought not so to operate. In order to do this, it would only be necessary for him to give a concise history of the origin and progress of this bill.—It would be in the recollection of all those who sat in the former parliament, that a Committee had been appointed to enquire into the state of the finances of the country; and that towards the latter end of the session of that short parliament the House had, in consequence of a report of that Committee, resolved unanimously, that no place in reversion should thenceforward be granted. When that Resolution, and the bill grounded upon it, were brought before the House, his right hon. friend, though not then minister, but yet a member of the House, said not one word of opposition against the bill. It was read a second time, and was proceeding to a Committee, when the dissolution of that parliament stopped its progress. On the meeting of the next parliament, his Majesty, in his speech from the throne, expressed his peculiar approbation of that Committee. On the meeting of the second session, his Majesty, in his speech, again repeated the same approbation of that Committee. The bill founded on the Resolution of the House was again brought forward and passed, but was, unexpectedly, towards the close of the first session, thrown out in the Lords; when the House, taking into consideration the lateness of the period, and the quarrels that were going on in the House, and finding there would not be time to pass another bill, thought proper to address his Majesty not to suffer any place in reversion to be granted during the recess.—The propriety of the principle that places ought not to be granted in reversion, was universally acknowledged. The bill, however, again failed. A consultation took place, and the Lords' Journals were inspected, to see if the Committee appointed for that purpose could find any particular reason why the bill had been rejected, but all in vain. Under all the circumstances of the session before last, when he found it was impossible to do more than he had done, he was himself the author of a temporary suspension bill, as he thought it afforded an opportunity to shew the temper and moderation of the House, and in order to avoid any thing that might lead to a misunderstanding between the two Houses. In doing this, he

did all he could to render the measure as palatable and as gracious as possible, but in no one particle of his conduct had he ever shewn the smallest tittle of inclination to give up his perpetual bill, and by inserting words suggested by his right hon. friend, as likely to ease the feelings of some particular individuals, he had acceded solely as thinking them of no very particular consequence. He should, therefore, think it peculiarly hard, if those words inserted in the preamble of the act just before read, should be urged against this bill; because he expressly stated, at the time, his reasons to be what he had just said, and that he had never lost sight of a perpetual one. It now became the House to shew they were determined to carry into execution that which they had already so unanimously resolved. That bill which had been rejected, could not be brought forward again; and, therefore, the best way was to resort to their former one. Suppose it should fail again, they might then do as they had done before. He thought after the House, and the whole country also, had shewn so great and unremitting an eagerness and anxiety to pass the bill, it would not be right to assume such a thing as that prejudices against it could still remain in the breasts of any persons elsewhere, after so much had been done to allay them first, and afterwards to eradicate them. It was needless, he thought, for him to call their attention to the necessity there was that the House should endeavour, by every means in their power, to preserve the good opinion of their constituents. The eyes of all classes in the country were fixed on them, and it was their incumbent duty to shew, at this important crisis, that the House were really the representatives of the people; in doing which, those who wished the representation to remain as it was, were as deeply interested as those who wished for reform. They should therefore persevere in that course which they had already adopted, and which had been so highly approved by the whole nation. There were, he said, three principal points of view, in which this measure would prove beneficial, and which spoke most forcibly in favour of his bill. First, it would be advantageous on the ground of public economy, which was always highly interesting to the people, and more particularly at such a period like the present, when taxes press on them with such peculiar severity.

He was not willing or desirous to hold out to the people any great hopes of an immediate sensible alleviation of their burdens from this measure; for he feared that during the continuance of this just war, they were more likely to be increased than diminished; but if the House would shew a design and determination to make retrenchments in expences wherever they can, it would go a great way towards rendering the public more patient, and inducing them to bear their burdens with less repining.—The second point was, that if the House prevented the granting of offices in reversion, it would certainly tend to the well filling of offices. The man who gave an office would take care that the person appointed to it was capable of discharging the duties appertaining to it; whereas, if it was given to a person out of sight, the contrary would be the case. Offices in reversion might be given, and he feared had been bestowed on persons, whose age or sex were highly unfitting to discharge their duties. They might be given to a child or an idiot; and it was important to recollect, that these persons having become possessed of places in reversion, had a vested interest when the person who gave them was dead and gone, and no way responsible for what he had done. It looked also as if places were not objects of trust, but merely of emolument. It could not be doubted that the main object was trust; but this mode of granting them in reversion overturned the principle, and encouraged the dangerous idea that offices were granted for the benefit of the possessor, and not for the benefit of the public.—It had always been the custom of the House, to consider the rights of individuals with stricter attention than they paid to the rights of the public. He meant to allude only to private rights. There were offices which a committee on public economy must think ought to be abolished, and it was equally pressing on them that this abuse should be corrected. He should here beg leave to illustrate his argument by adverting to a particular case. There was one case in which the whole supply of medicines both to the navy and army was committed to one person. Supposing that should be granted in reversion, and it might be found necessary to buy it up and abolish the office, that could not be done, because the committee could not lay their hands on it on that account. It was true that this place was not at present granted in

reversion, but it might be so granted, and if it were, it would be obviously a great evil. He thought he might also fairly assume, that this mode of granting offices in reversion tended to increase sinecure offices; for when they got into particular hands, it was said they became vested, when the duties of them became soon neglected, and thus offices necessary when first instituted, by this mode of granting them became mere sinecures. Many members of the House had expressed their wishes to abolish sinecures; and if they were in earnest, why should not they be equally desirous of getting rid of that baneful practice which turns offices, that were once efficient, into mere sinecure offices, to the great detriment of the public, and to the great injury of the service of the country? This mode of granting reversions had also been applied to pensions, and did, in fact, controul the fair exercise of the crown, in the distribution of its bounty granted by parliament. The third point it would not be necessary to enlarge upon. His right honourable friend had never entered into the consideration of it in the same way as many others, who had conceived and encouraged alarms of trenching on the prerogative of the crown. This bill rather tended to restore the prerogative. It was well known and universally admitted, that the disposal of offices can only remain with the crown; but it was equally certain that the crown ought to have the office to give, unencumbered at the time it was bestowed. Upon these grounds he would move, "That leave be given to bring in a bill, to make perpetual the act which had just been read."

Mr. *Henry Thornton* seconded the motion. Although he felt the great respect which was due to the other House, yet he considered that it was the peculiar province of that House, as guardians of the public purse, to consider of measures which tended to lighten the burdens of the country. He conceived that it might be possible that the Lords should be somewhat too precipitate in the rejection of any thing which might appear to invade the royal prerogative; but still it appeared, that any thing which regarded the expenditure of the country came more naturally under the controul of the House of Commons. It was true, that many important improvements had been introduced of late years, and that in former periods of our history, the power of the crown was

less contralled in respect to granting offices and pensions than it was at present. It had been found necessary to limit the prerogative of the crown with respect to the Irish pension list; nevertheless, the principle of that limitation can still be violated, as the act only refers to the amount of the pension list, and not to the period for which the pensions are granted. The consequence is, that since that restriction, whatever pensions are given in Ireland, are generally given for more than one life. He could not see any reason for preferring an annual bill to a perpetual one, as most abundant time had now been given, for the consideration of the subject, and gentlemen must have perfectly formed their opinions upon it. As to the prerogative of the crown, the bill had a greater tendency to increase than to abridge it. A gift of a place in reversion was not worth a sixth part of the real value of the place when the actual possession could be given. Considering the bill, therefore, as advantageous to the public, and not injurious to the prerogative, he should beg leave to second the motion.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that this was a subject which had been so frequently before the House, that he did not think it necessary to trouble them at much length in expressing his sentiments. It was almost impossible that any novelty could now be produced on either side; and the hon. gentlemen who had preceded him, appeared to have done ample justice to the side of the case which they supported. He felt himself however called upon to state his reasons for differing in opinion from them; and he must in the first place recal to the recollection of the House that he had never yet given any opposition to the principle of the bill, on the ground of its being likely to affect the royal prerogative. With regard to economy, and its tending materially to lighten the burthens of the people, he always stated that he could not see any of those great advantages which its supporters, and a considerable part of the public, expected from it; but, with respect to the royal prerogative, he had always stated, that he thought its tendency was rather to increase than diminish it. He did, however, always consider, and still thought, that very exaggerated notions of the advantages of this bill had gone abroad; and that many persons had been deluded into an opinion that the public burdens would be sensibly diminished by its operation. That it could

produce any important effects in lessening the public burthens he always denied; but at the same time he allowed that the restricting, for a time, the power of granting offices in reversion, might be of advantage, in allowing the House time to consider which, or whether any of those places ought to be abolished or reformed. This was, as he conceived, the great object of the bill in point of economy, and might be obtained by a temporary bill. He thought therefore that a temporary bill was the most proper, as the subject of reversions was still under the consideration of the Committee; and he conceived that it was the report of that Committee alone which would give sufficient materials to the House to decide permanently what ought to be done on the subject. As long as it should be under investigation before that Committee, he thought that it would be the best way to pass temporary bills of restriction, and to come to a final judgment after the report should be given in. If, therefore, the House would keep this prerogative in a state of suspense during the time that the subject was under enquiry, they would keep the power of abolishing or reforming such offices as ought to be abolished or reformed fully as much as if they were to make the bill perpetual. If they proceeded to alter the prerogative of the crown in any respect, there should, at least, be sufficient reasons stated for such an alteration. When the Report of the Finance Committee was upon the table, the House would then have before it the grounds of judging whether such alteration was necessary. There was a recent instance to which the attention of the public had lately been drawn, and which shewed how precipitately they might take up a wrong opinion. He alluded to an office which had lately become vacant, and wherein the public might have suffered great inconvenience, if there had not been somebody immediately to put in the place of the officer who had resigned. These considerations had always induced him to consent to temporary bills for restricting the prerogative. As to economy and the prospect of alleviating the burden on the public, it was exactly the same thing to them, whether the office was held by the man who had got it in possession or reversion. The same sum of money was paid in either case. He was, however, ready to agree that there were many offices which might in future be reformed or abolished; but still as he

never understood it to be the intention of the supporters of the bill to interfere with the vested rights of any individual, he thought it could be of little importance to their object, whether the same effect was produced by a temporary bill or by a perpetual bill. He concluded by moving an Amendment to the motion, that the following words should be substituted for the original: "A Bill for continuing and extending the said Act for a time to be limited."

After the Speaker had read the proposed Amendment,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose again and said, that although he felt it his duty to state his sentiments, yet, if he perceived the strong sense of the House to be the other way, he would not press a division.

Mr. *Ponsonby* said, that the right hon. gent. had passed over all that had been urged by the hon. member in favour of his motion, and dwelt wholly upon that which needed no refutation. That right hon. gent. had observed, that the argument against reversions, as affecting the public economy, was the weakest of all the objections that had been made, and yet the right hon. gent. had over-looked all the other objections, and confined his observations to the weakest of them. He would ask that right hon. gent. how numerous were the offices which would not now be in existence but for those grants in reversion? The difference in the expenditures between the departments where the proposed regulations had effect, and those where they could not act, was known to be most considerable, and was there no reason to suppose, even from this circumstance, that if the bill proposed should pass into a law, it would not, in its ultimate operation, materially affect the public economy? but he thought the influence derived from those grants of still more importance than the effect of their suppression upon the public economy. Was it nothing to deprive the crown of its legitimate influence by deferring its exercise to future times, and compelling the minister of the day to look to other sources to supply those whom they were to support? Must not the House feel the effect of adding to the public burthens in that way? He agreed with the hon. mover, that it was wrong to delude the people by holding out exaggerated expectations of retrenchment, which could not be realized. He thought it mean and mischievous in

any man, from any party motive, to make statements of practical economy to the public, which, at the time of making them he knew to be impracticable. He did not think that any very sensible or immediate effect could result as to the alleviation of the public burthens, from the passing of the bill in question; but he thought that it would in time have that effect, and that much benefit might be expected from the operation of the principle. He concurred also with the honourable mover in thinking, that the disposal of the great offices of the state ought to be at all times vested in the crown, and could not, with safety to the constitution, be lodged any where else. He, therefore, thought it unfair to anticipate the exercise of that prerogative, and that nothing could be more unjust than that anticipation should be resorted to, for the mere purpose of perpetuating the influence of a corrupt minister by enabling him to draw upon the future resources of the crown, to the detriment of the King, his successors, and their ministers. He concluded by conjuring the House not to give their sanction to any principle pregnant with such abuses, nor to rest satisfied with any thing short of a perpetual prevention bill.

Mr. *Davies Giddy* considered the grant of reversions as productive of more evils to the public service than the grant of sinecures. He should be at all times ready to support every prerogative of the crown, that did not militate against the interests of the subject, but in the present case he did not think the prerogative materially affected. He thought the principle of the bill would in its ultimate operation have a beneficial effect upon the public economy, and so far as it was possible for the human mind to prejudge the result of its own intentions, he thought there had been few cases in which it might, in every point of view, calculate so fairly upon a prosperous issue, as in the probable consequences of the bill proposed.

Sir *Samuel Romilly* could not conceive, if the grant of reversions were at all a matter from which inconvenience was found to result, why it should not be at once abolished. There never could be any advantage in a temporary law on this subject. What would this be but to confess, that the principle of granting offices in reversion was bad, and yet that there would be an accumulation of such offices to be granted by a minister all at one time; thereby adding to, and in-

creasing the evil which already existed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to overlook every thing that was great in the present question, and to fix only on that part of it which was insignificant.—He conceived the prohibiting of the granting of reversions, however, to be a measure which would be extremely beneficial both to the crown and to the people. Either these offices had duties attached to them, or they were sinecures. If there were duties to be performed, how absurd, how dangerous the granting of any such office, to commence at a future and indefinite period. At the time the reversion was granted, the person on whom it was conferred might be, in every respect, qualified for the discharge of its duties. He might have the requisite abilities, and he might enjoy a pure and spotless character. At the time when the reversion fell in to him, however, he might be no longer fit for the situation; his intellects might be impaired, or his reputation might be gone. Yet there was no resource—the situation he held would legally be vested, and, however injurious to the interests of the country, the situation he must enjoy. It was a determined point, the learned gent. observed, that no office in a court of law could be held in reversion. There was a report by lord Coke of a case, in queen Elizabeth's time, where a reversion having been granted of the office of auditor of the court of aids, such grant was held to be void, because, though the office was not purely judicial, it partook of that character.

He agreed that it had never been determined that other offices than those of a judicial nature might not be granted in reversion; but still, what was applicable to offices of that kind could not be inapplicable to other offices of trust or confidence in the country; and where talents or character were requisite in the persons filling such offices, the rule was surely applicable, though probably not to the same extent. He would ask, if the House would believe that a man, in the sound use of his capacity, would appoint a steward, or even a common servant, to succeed on the death of another person then exercising the duties of either of these stations? And then he left it to them to say, if it were becoming that they should allow the offices in the state to be dealt with in a manner different from that with which they would wish menial situations in their own service to be disposed of? Whether

sinecures should exist, or not, was not now the question.—But if they should, they should be for services past, and already performed. If offices in reversion were to be given for such services, much would be given by the people, and yet little received by the persons performing the service. All they received was a contingency or chance of something which might never be realized, and which at the moment, held out very little advantage to them. There could not be a more improvident use of the public resources. To grant reversions in such a case was just like sending an improvident heir into the market, with what might be of real use and substantial benefit to him if he waited patiently till it came into his possession; but for which if to be disposed of at present, he could not expect to receive the sixth part of its value. It was a much worse way of rewarding services than by granting pensions; because a man of spirit would hardly wish to take a pension where he had performed no service; but reversions, if there were none to reward, would always find some one ready to take them.

He was surprised his right hon. friend should represent this as a point of so little moment, after he had advised his Majesty in his speech from the throne, to mention the labours of the committee of finance as affording matter of congratulation, at a time when they had gone no farther than to recommend the adoption of this measure. When so much was said in other places against the present measure, as carrying with it an attack on the prerogative of the crown, the House would excuse him for submitting to them the authority, against these aspersions, of one of the most learned writers on the law of this country, at a period, too, when it was his object to guard the law, and to protect it against mischievous innovation. He meant Mr. Justice Hale, in his treatise on the amendment of the Law, in which he has so strongly stated his opinion, that reversions were improper, and should not be granted; that he did not esteem it sufficient that the law should be prospective but retrospective; that they should be abolished at that present moment; and that pensions should be granted in lieu of them. That learned judge was of opinion, that reversions were worse for the person receiving them, and worse also for the King; that it was better to give a pension, and then an honest man would

know how to use it. There were offices, too, probably with salaries of 1,000*l.*, the duties of which were performed by deputies, to whom again the principals gave trifling allowances, of probably not more than 100*l.* Judge Hale was also of opinion, that all such offices were an unnecessary charge on the King and on the people: that the offices themselves were not necessary; if they were, why were the duties of them discharged by the deputies alone? Surely there could not be a more improvident way of disposing of those funds, which ought to be distributed in that way, by which the King and the people would derive the most advantage. The hon. and learned gent. did not see that there was any difference of opinion in the House on the subject of this measure. If the House might, as the right hon. gent. stated, come to the resolution next year of continuing the prevention, why not do it now, and if now, why not declare it to be unlawful in all time coming? It was for the House now to do their duty, and if their successors should be of a contrary mind, they might afterwards act agreeably to their own ideas of propriety.

The question was then put on Mr. Bankes's motion, for leave to bring in a bill to render the said act perpetual, when it was carried by an acclamation, in one voice, by the whole House. On the question upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer's motion, his own and one other voice were all that could be heard.

[FINANCE COMMITTEE.] Mr. Bankes then said, he should use but a few words in prefacing the motion he should have to submit for the re-appointment of the Finance Committee. He was sure that there was not a gentleman in the House who would wish to oppose the re-appointment of this Committee. He should therefore first move that a Committee be appointed, and then he should submit the names of the gentlemen he had to propose, as likely to form an effective Committee for the purpose for which it was established. It was material for the House to consider to what sort of persons they delegated such a duty, for the object in view could never be attained, if the House did not make a proper choice of the members of whom the Committee was to be composed. The former Committee was too numerous, and the gentlemen were of jarring sentiments, so that no progress could be made. He proposed therefore in the first place, to limit the present Committee to fifteen instead of



twenty-one, and in selecting the members, he had taken them indiscriminately from both sides, making it his only study to suggest those who seemed most likely to promote the objects of their appointment. He meant nothing insulting or invidious to the gentlemen on the former Committee. But, if differences did arise among the members of such a Committee which led greatly to retard their progress, the House would hardly think that men of hostile minds, and with different views, not on the details, but on the broad principle on which the Committee was appointed, were fit men to sit with any good effect on such an investigation. They must, he submitted, be men of one sort or another. He concluded by moving, That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the Public Expenditure. This motion was carried unanimously.—The hon. gent. then moved that the following be the names of the Committee. Mr. Henry Thornton, Mr. Biddulph, Mr. Sturges Bourne, Mr. Brogden, Mr. Cavendish, Mr. Baring, Mr. Alderman Combe, Mr. Mills, Mr. Charles Ellis, Mr. Curwen, Mr. Peel, Mr. Davies Giddy, Mr. Bathurst, Mr. Bankes.

The House then resolved that the Committee should be appointed. On the motion being put, that Mr. Bankes should form one of the Committee,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said he did not mean to give any opposition to the Committee being formed, but he trusted that the House would pause before they gave their concurrence to the formation of a Committee so different in its principle from that in the preceding years. He wished members from all parts of the House to compose it, that they might the more easily discover the truth, from the different views which they might take of the same subject. He then proposed that the Committee should consist of twenty-one persons, and that the following six gentlemen should be added to fifteen of the members of the former Committee: The Hon. Mr. Ward, Mr. Peele, Mr. Giddy, Mr. Pattison, Mr. Charles Dundas, Mr. Howorth.

Sir John Newport was not surprised at the wish of the right hon. gent. that the Committee should be composed of discordant materials, as he had given the House a sample of the happy effects of disunion in his discordant cabinet. He had an objection even to the list of the hon. gent. (Mr. Bankes), because it contained no member either for Scotland or Ireland.

In no part of the empire had there been more abuses, more jobbing, more reverendary grants, more conversion of offices, first executed by principals, into sinecures, or offices executed by deputy, than in Ireland.

Mr. Bathurst thought he had upon a former occasion voted against several of the members whom he personally knew and esteemed, yet he was of opinion, that the names of the Committee should be the same as last session, unless some reason could be assigned for removing any of them. But his hon. friend appeared to wish to have the Committee all his own way. This was not a political or a party question. As persons on the same side may differ as to the means of carrying a common object into effect, he could see no inconvenience that would arise from appointing persons of different opinions upon the Committee.

Mr. Bankes, in explanation, stated, that he had never arrogated to himself the right of dictating to the committee; nor thought of nominating those only who would agree with him, upon it. It was impossible for any gentleman to look at the list he proposed, and assert, that the gentlemen upon it were persons who would submit to receive his dictation.

Mr. Fuller was of opinion that the Committee had not hitherto done its duty, in not bringing forward a measure for the abolition of the three sinecure places which they had already brought forward. He hoped they would yet do their duty, and that every honest man of every party would support him in the general motion on this subject, which he should have to bring forward in a few days. He thought the best mode of adjusting the list would be, for the honourable mover and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take man and man each.

Lord A. Hamilton freed the hon. gent. from any idea of wishing to controul the Committee while he was chairman of it. He did not expect much from the Committee as it was last constituted; and he thought that after three years had elapsed from its first appointment, it was time some of the recommendations of the Committee should at last be carried into effect.

The *Solicitor General* contended for the right of naming the Committee still being in his right hon. friend, out of whose hands the hon. gent. had attempted to take it. To pass by the gentlemen of the last Committee, would be condemning

them without any other proof than the bare assertion of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. *Dennis Brown* expressed his readiness to defend himself and the other members of the last Committee from any charge that might be made against them.

Mr. *H. Thornton* explained that no charge was made, except the impossibility of his hon. friend's supposing that they could act cordially together after several of them had shewn a disposition to withdraw themselves.

The question was then put, when the names of Mr. *Bankes*, Mr. *H. Thornton*, and Mr. *Biddulph* were agreed to without opposition. Mr. *Bankes* then proposed the name of Mr. *S. Bourne*.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, fortunately there was no man for whom he had a more sincere friendship than for the gentleman now named. It could not be supposed, therefore, that he opposed his name standing on the list for any other reason than because he was not one of the last committee.—He proposed that instead of the name of Mr. *S. Bourne*, there be inserted the name of Mr. *Hawkins Brown*.

The House divided on the question, that Mr. *Sturges Bourne* be one of the Committee. Ayes 107; Noes 98; Majority 9. Strangers were not again admitted into the gallery, but two further divisions took place which were understood to have been as follows: Mr. *Bankes* proposed Mr. *Cavendish*. The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved as an amendment, that the name of Mr. *Leycester* be substituted instead of that of Mr. *Cavendish*. The House divided on the question, that Mr. *Cavendish* be one of the Committee. Ayes 108; Noes 103; Majority 5. Mr. *Bankes* then proposed *Alderman Combe*, upon which the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved an amendment, that Mr. *Dennis Brown* be substituted. The House divided on the question, that Mr. *Alderman Combe* be one of the Committee. Ayes 117; Noes 104; Majority 13.

#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Thursday, February 1.*

[AMERICA.] Earl *Grey* moved for several papers relative to Mr. *Erskine's* negotiations in America, consisting of dispatches from Mr. *Canning* to Mr. *Erskine*, containing instructions, &c.; dispatches from the latter to the former; and letters

from Mr. *Erskine* to the American secretary of state. Understanding there was no objection to their production, he should not take up the time of their lordships by making any prefatory observations.

Marquis *Wellesley* had no objection to the production of the papers moved for by the noble earl; the transaction to which they referred being a thing past, no public inconvenience could now result from producing them. It might, perhaps, be necessary that some further papers should be produced: and if, upon investigation, he should find it so, he would move for them on Monday.

Lord *Erskine* said, that he was glad the papers were to be produced. He had some particular reasons for rising on this occasion to address a few observations to their lordships; considering the connection he stood in to that very near relation of his, who was intrusted by government with the American negotiation. There was only one small piece of paper which would appear when the papers were produced, of which he knew any thing. He declared upon his honour, that he had never seen the instructions, nor was consulted nor acquainted with the particulars of the transaction. It had been said, that from his known difference in politics with the present administration, it was likely, that the gentleman who was entrusted with the negotiations, had acted under the impression of political principles different from those of the government which employed him in so important a situation. In his name, he (lord *Erskine*) took upon himself publicly to disavow such a feeling and such conduct. If he could have believed that such were the case—if he thought that he could have acted upon opinions of his own, contrary to those of that government of which he was only the instrument and agent, then, nearly as he was connected with him, he should not only have reprobated his conduct, he should never again have spoken a word to him in the whole course of his life. His lordship said he came into that House, free from any private considerations, to the discussion of the business respecting America, and to give his opinion and his vote, as a statesman and a peer of parliament, with a view only to the true interests of his country.

The motion for papers was carried *nem. con.*

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Thursday, February 1.*

[**STAMPS ON BANKERS' CHECKS.**] Mr. *Giles* rose, pursuant to notice, to submit a motion to the House, for leave to bring in a bill to amend the 48th of the King. In apportioning the duties upon stamps on bills of exchange, the fair principle had ever been, that the rate of the stamp should vary according to the amount of the bill. All those bills were, however, exempted from this equitable principle, which were drawn upon a banker ten miles distant from the residence of the drawer—a former act had provided that a penalty of 20*l.* should be inflicted upon any person drawing a draft upon his banker at that distance without a receipt. He admitted this act had been evaded, and that many persons had drawn drafts without stamps upon their bankers who did not live within 100 miles of their place of residence. Last year, however, at a very late period of the session his right hon. friend had introduced the bill which he now proposed to amend; it was speedily passed into a law, at a time when the attendance of members was thin; and after the termination of the session, people were taken by surprise, in the month of August, on discovering that they could no longer draw a check upon their banker unless it was upon a stamp. In that bill, his right hon. friend had imposed the same duty as in the original bill. But a material alteration had been made in the penalty, for instead of 20*l.* as in the former it was 200*l.*; the penalty he thought rather excessive, and the restriction to ten miles rather circumscribed. He was sure that in point of revenue this regulation would not be at all productive, because, in the first place, it would be so very easily evaded—or he should rather say, avoided; a man could so easily transfer his cash from a banker without the distance to one within the limits of ten miles. So far he felt it necessary to say as to produce; then as to inconvenience, he was persuaded it would be found extremely severe. Gentlemen could not, at all times, get stamps in the country; besides a man regularly residing within the due limits, should he take a ride five miles from his house, and there have occasion to draw on his banker, he must draw upon a stamp, or otherwise fall within the penalty. Another evil consequence that resulted from this act, was, that of increasing to an enormous amount the number of country

banks. He knew of a small circle of country, within which no less than ten of those banks had lately sprung up; it tended, of consequence, to increase the issue of country bank notes. As to the inconveniences resulting from the operation of the act, he instanced the case of a person who lately removed his money from his banker in London to a bank at Hertford; his dealings were extensive, and there was scarce a market he frequented in which he was not at more than ten miles distance from his bank. The only feasible object it could pretend to have in view, was the prevention of frauds; but even in this view he did not think it would be successful. The most prominent objection, however, seemed to him to be that of the limitation of distance to ten miles. He thought it would be wiser to regulate this restriction by the analogy of the privilege of members of that House to frank their letters. This privilege extended to forty miles distance from the place dated from. He should propose, therefore, that the distance of the residence of the drawer from the bank drawn upon, should amount to upwards of forty miles, to subject such person to the penalty in case he did not make his draft upon a stamp. The other regulations which he intended to introduce would come before the House in the course of the progress of the bill, if the House would allow him to bring it in. He then concluded by moving, For leave to bring in a bill to regulate and amend the 48th of the king.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he did not rise to object to the motion of his hon. friend, as he was not yet prepared to say, what had been the revenue produced under the operation of the 48th of the king. He was, however, apprehensive, that if the limitation of distance should be extended to 40 miles, it would, instead of amending the act, have the effect of abolishing the tax altogether. He thought it better for the House to wait until the statement of the produce revenue derived under the act should be before them. It was a tax of that nature which more particularly affected themselves; and therefore they should be cautious not to evince any impatience to remove it. His hon. friend had laboured under a mistake in confounding the introduction of the bill with the passing of it; it had been passed in a late period of that session, but not introduced at a late one.

The motion was then agreed to.

[EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.—EXCLUSION OF STRANGERS.] Mr. *Yorke* rose to put a question to a noble lord opposite. He wished to know if that noble lord intended to move the next day to go into a Committee upon the Expedition to the Scheldt.

Lord *Porchester* replied in the affirmative.

Mr. *Yorke* then said, that he took that opportunity of giving notice, that in case that Inquiry should be gone into the next day he would proceed to enforce the standing order of the House, for the exclusion of strangers. This he did not from any wish to keep their proceedings from publicity in due time, but with a view to guard against the possibility of any misrepresentation or misunderstanding out of doors before the Minutes should be published, a precaution that appeared to him necessary to be taken before they proceeded to an Inquiry to be carried on in the manner in which they had determined that important investigation should be conducted.

[BULLION AND BANK NOTES.] Mr. *Horner* pursuant to notice rose to move for a variety of accounts and returns respecting the present state of the circulating medium, and the bullion trade. He expressed a decided opinion, that it was necessary for the House to make an Inquiry into the causes of the present high price of bullion, and the consequent effect upon the value of the paper currency, not only on account of the real importance of the subject, but in consequence of the great misconceptions which too generally prevailed respecting the causes of the actual situation of the country with reference to this subject. The most effectual mode of investigating this highly interesting question would be by a Select Committee, and it was therefore his intention on an early day to move for such a Committee. But it would be not only convenient but indispensable, in the first instance, to obtain all such information on the whole of the subject, as papers might afford; which information could afterwards be referred to the Committee. He would not adopt the opinion which prevailed among some people, that the high price of gold, and the depreciation of paper, (for depreciation in a certain sense it was) were to be ascribed to the number of country banks; for the better their nature and operation were understood, it would the more clearly appear, that they formed an essential part

of our system of credit and currency. Nor was he prepared at once to adopt another conclusion which had been urged in various forms before the public, that the explanation of the cause of the present evils must be referred wholly to an undue issue of notes by the Bank of England: for, though an excess in the market price of gold above its mint price, would be one certain consequence of such an undue issue, yet that same excess might originate from other causes, or be enhanced by other circumstances. He did not presume as yet to form a clear or confident conclusion upon the subject; it was to arrive at a correct opinion that he wished the House to call for the information and undertake the Inquiry he meant to propose. His present conjecture was, that the high price of gold might be produced partly by a larger circulation of Bank of England paper than was necessary, and partly by the new circumstances in which the foreign trade of this country was placed; by which a continual demand for bullion was produced, not merely to discharge the balance of trade as in the ordinary state of things, but for the purpose of carrying on some of the most important branches of our commerce; such as the purchase of naval stores from the Baltic, and grain from countries under the controul and dominion of the enemy. He believed the former cause to operate, because the market price of gold had been higher than the mint price almost ever since the restriction of bank payments in 1797; and he suspected the influence of the latter from this circumstance, that there was not merely a nominal depreciation of paper as compared with bullion, but a real demand for bullion itself all over the country. The state of the exchange was no doubt in some degree the cause of this demand for bullion; but, perhaps, it was in some degree also the effect of that transfer of bullion from this country, which was created by the necessities of trade and the new system of commercial warfare. But all this was matter for Inquiry. What remedy ought to be provided, would, of course, turn upon what should be ascertained to be the nature and cause of the evil. If it consisted in an excessive issue of paper by the Bank of England, the remedy would be in the hands of parliament, and had been already resorted to in the case of the misconduct of the Bank of Ireland. If the real cause of the high price of gold

was the demand for it, as an article of trade or a medium for carrying on our trade, there was no other cure for that but an adequate supply; and it was one of the many important considerations which arose out of the present situation of the colonies of Spain in the new world, how their immense resources of precious metals might best be rendered available for our accommodation. Those colonies, independently of the Brazils, might easily furnish above the value of nine millions sterling annually of the precious metals. The mines of Mexico were said to produce annually about 25 millions of dollars; those of Peru 15 millions, and it was thought that if the mines of Peru were better worked they would prove infinitely more abundant in the production of bullion than even those of Mexico. When the state of our circulating medium came to be inquired into in the Committee, there were several peculiarities which had been too long overlooked, especially the depreciation of our silver coin, which it would be necessary in order to a clear understanding of the subject particularly to attend to. It was quite unnecessary for him to state to the House that silver still continued according to the laws of our mint, the standard measure of all commercial value. Nothing could be more obvious than the necessity, in an inquiry concerning the state of the circulating medium generally, of previously ascertaining any and what precise fluctuations may have taken place in the value of that metal, to which the whole is referable as a permanent standard. Another fact also, that would occupy necessarily much of the attention of the Committee, was the alteration that had taken place in the relative value of gold and silver, from that fixed by the regulations of the mint. In the time of Edw. 1, the ratio of silver to gold was as 1 to 9; at a much later period as 1 to 15; subsequently again as 1 to 15 and a very small fraction; but the ratio or proportion at present was 1 to 15½. From documents which he had seen, and upon the accuracy of which he had every reason to rely, it appeared that for more than fifty years back, the supply of bullion gold and silver from the mines of America had not increased very much; and that the increase of the latter was in a much greater degree than that of the former. The hon. gent. concluded by moving "That there be laid before this House—1. An Account of the quantity of gold and silver

exported from the different ports of the United Kingdom to foreign parts in each of the last ten years, to the 1st of February 1810, distinguishing gold and silver, distinguishing bullion, wrought plate, and coin, and distinguishing the ports and places from and to which the said exportations were made.—2. An Account of the quantity of gold and silver imported into the United Kingdom in each of the last ten years to the 1st of February 1810, distinguishing gold and silver, distinguishing bullion, wrought plate and coin, and distinguishing, as far as the same may be done, the foreign parts from which the said importations were made.—3. An Account of the export and import of gold and silver from and to Ireland, from the year 1803 to the 5th of January 1810; distinguishing gold and silver, and distinguishing bullion, wrought plate and coin.—4. An Account of the number of licences for the issue of promissory notes payable on demand, which were granted by, or by authority of, the Commissioners of Stamps, for the year ending the 10th of October 1809.—5. An Account of the quantity of bullion or coin which has been seized in the two years ending the 1st of February 1810, under the authority of the Statutes which regulate the exportation of bullion and coin.—6. An Account of all dollars issued by the Bank of England to the latest period to which the same can be made up.—7. An Account of the amount of the Notes of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England in circulation on the 7th and 12th days of each month, from December 1808 to the 12th of January 1810, inclusive; distinguishing the Bank Post Bills, and distinguishing the amount of Notes under the value of five pounds.—8. An Account of the quantity of gold and silver exported by the East India Company to China and the East Indies, whether on account of the Company or of private persons, from the year 1788 to the latest period to which the same can be made up; distinguishing the export to China, and bullion from coin."

Mr. *Davies Giddy* thought that this was a subject which, like many others, had been industriously wrapped up in a sort of mystery that did not belong to it. If it was looked at through the plain medium of common sense and reason, it would appear by no means the involved and abstruse question it was generally thought to be. The fact appeared to him to be sim-

ply this, that the price of gold and silver, like the price of any other commodity, was regulated by the demand for it. If any substitute could be found that could answer the required purpose, as well as the commodity so much sought for, and that substitute could be had at a much cheaper rate, it would follow, by necessary consequence, that the commodity itself could not continue to be in such demand, and that its price would proportionally decrease. He would illustrate to the House his meaning—if the copper used in sheathing both our military and mercantile navy should be postponed, by the preference given to some other cheaper and as durable substance, and our shipping should be sheathed with that substance, there would be, of course, such a rush of copper into the market, as to occasion a very great reduction of price and general circulation of that metal. He differed from the hon. gent. who so ably introduced this subject in one point, and that was with respect to the country banks. He could not think them of such service to the credit and commerce of the country as that gentleman seemed to think them. With respect to the great circulation of paper money however, he thought that it materially contributed to throw the specie into the market. But so long as the tax gatherers should continue to receive paper money at par, there would be no great danger of any depreciation of its value from what was called an over issue. He was not prepared then to go fully into the question, but should content himself with adding that in his opinion it was a subject well worth the most serious attention of that House.

Mr. G. *Johnstone* said he could not but compliment what he might call the philosophical speech of the hon. mover. He thought the subject deserved to be maturely weighed, and that every effort should be made to trace the present unfortunate state of the currency to its true cause; which he believed to be the excess of paper issues.

Mr. M. *Dorrien Magens* thought it in the first instance necessary, that the House should with all convenient dispatch possess itself of every possible information upon this very important subject. He had not hastily formed his opinions upon it, but, however confident he might feel in the justice of these opinions then, he should defer stating them till the House should be better enabled to come to some conclusion. He acknowledged, that if it were his in-

tention at that time to go into detail, he believed he should be led to take a very different view of the paper currency of the country, and its consequences, from that which others who preceded him seemed disposed to take. He hoped the motion of the hon. gent. would be acceded to, as the question appeared to him to be of such pressing interest and great magnitude, that it could not be too fully entered into.

Mr. *Patteson* approved of the motion, and vindicated the country bankers from the objections made to them by an hon. gent. (Mr. *Davies Giddy*.) He thought them a source of great commercial convenience in as much as their own notes they always changed for bank of England notes, and it was not to be supposed that they could have got them without a due equivalent.

Mr. H. *Thornton* said, the most important fact to ascertain was, what was the real price of bullion. The number of notes of the bank of England in circulation might vary; so might country bank notes; the amount of the paper in circulation, therefore, could not enable the House to form an accurate judgment upon the subject; the price of gold alone was that to which the circulation of the country ought to conform. The bank of England paper, however, was that to which parliament should most particularly attend; for the directors of the bank of England might, by reducing the value of their paper, compel the country banks to do so likewise. It had been said, this evil had a natural tendency to correct itself, but it had not yet corrected itself. It was well known that nobody could get gold from the bank of England.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* did not rise to oppose the motion that had been made with so much ability. He would, however, venture to suggest his difference of opinion, with respect to one or two points. First, he confessed he could not understand, how the reduction of the bank of England paper could affect the price of bullion. He thought, that they must consider gold as an article of trade; and if a guinea, that is, the quantity of gold coined into a guinea was worth, at Hamburg, more than 21 shillings, no reduction of their home circulation of paper currency could affect the rate or the value of bullion in the foreign market, which rate or value was to be ascribed to other causes. They were to look to the extent of the wars so

long carried on, which could not be carried on without money, for the decrease of bullion in this country and its consequent augmentation of price. The additional demand for bullion; the considerable interruption in the supply of bullion, in consequence of so long a war with Spain; the quantity that might be supposed to be hid and buried, in consequence of the alarms, real or unfounded, arising from the critical circumstances of the times,—could all this be said to be owing to the increased circulation of paper? An hon. gent. had furnished them with an illustration; but with what view? The substitution of something else for copper in sheathing shipping would throw that copper into the market, certainly; but would it not cheapen that copper? Whereas, in the case of the paper currency, the paper was put as a substitute for gold; but the gold had not lessened in price, it had increased, so that he could not see the analogy, for the paper was to the gold as the supposed substitute to the copper. He, however, threw out these suggestions with great diffidence, as he was aware that he was not as well informed on the question as he hoped yet to be, when the various papers were before the House. He, therefore, should reserve to himself the right of retracting any opinion upon this subject, which more knowledge and maturer deliberation might induce him to change.

Mr. *Marryatt* agreed with the right hon. gent. that the quantity of paper money in circulation had not occasioned the scarcity in bullion so justly complained of; but at the same time, he could not admit, that bullion had increased in value all over the world in the same proportion as it had done here. All the evidence which by acceding to the motion would be laid on the table, he was satisfied would throw no light on the subject; and the question would be found at last wholly to depend on the difference in the rate of exchange against us in the different markets, being from 20 to 35 per cent. Every person who could carry a guinea over to the continent, would receive 28s. in return, and all the regulations the House might adopt would not be sufficient to bring one back. All the evil, he was satisfied, was to be traced to the indiscriminate use of licenses, by which all the staple commodities of France and her allies were brought to this country in return for bullion and specie. The influx of these commodities turned the rate of exchange against us to the

enormous degree already mentioned. The great importation of naval stores, too, for government, all of which must be paid for in specie, had contributed greatly to this end; all was to be traced to the destructive practice of licenses. If this system were done away, things would be turned speedily into their old channel.

Mr. *Baring* thought the papers moved for might be of some service in correcting theories of the different gentlemen, which, in his opinion, were radically wrong. He did not, however, say, that the papers themselves would be sufficient to enable the gentlemen to form a fair judgment on the subject. The difficulty, he suspected, would be found to be in the state of the trade of the country. Undoubtedly, a paper circulation did expose the country to have the rate of exchange turned against her whenever the trade was against her. In sir W. Temple's time, when this country wished to grant a subsidy to the bishop of Munster, it was found impossible to do so, because we could not send the coin in which it was to be raised. This could not affect our paper; but if in the present change of circumstances it were resolved to make an exertion, we must send our paper abroad for the purpose of raising the money, this must immediately produce a depreciation. A guinea, at this moment, brought 26s. or 27s. and a pound brought only 19 livres French, whereas it used formerly to be worth 24 livres. Much as he disliked the trade by licenses, he could not attach to them the whole cause of the depreciation on the Foreign exchange, because these licenses were for imports as well as exports. We had, however, during the last year, immense imports of naval stores from the Baltic, the trade of the former year having been interrupted, and this year the imports were probably equal to the consumption of two or three years. All this must be paid for in specie. Formerly these imports were made in our own ships; on the present occasion, foreign vessels had been employed. The expence of freightage consequently must also be paid in specie, and on a moderate computation could not be reckoned at less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million. What was formerly obtained for one million might now be fairly estimated at 200,000*l.* more; and where a foreign merchant formerly drew for 100*l.* he now drew for 120*l.* We now received no bullion as we were formerly accustomed to do from the Brazils, but rather sent bullion thither.

The present system of commerce tended to deteriorate our rate of exchange. Every encouragement was given to the importation of cotton wool from Brazil rather than from America, although the former must be paid for in specie, while the latter had been, and still might be obtained by giving our own manufactures in exchange. The same was also the case with respect to foreign shipping employed in this trade, the freight of which must likewise be paid in bullion. These, he was satisfied, were the causes of the rate of exchange being so immensely against this country, and there was not a merchant of any experience who might be called before the committee, who would not confirm what he had stated.—The Motions were then agreed to.

[THANKS TO LORD WELLINGTON AND THE ARMY AT TALAVERA.] The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, in rising to move the Thanks of the House to lord Wellington and the officers and soldiers under his command, for the skill and valour, so eminently displayed in the battle of Talavera, could not refrain from expressing painful regret at the symptoms of opposition which were incidentally manifested in that House, and which had previously been manifested elsewhere. He was the more grieved at this opposition, because he thought it could not be denied that the action for which he was about to move their thanks, was one of the most splendid that had ever graced or distinguished our military annals, that had ever shed lustre upon the British arms. Whether they considered the numbers, the bravery, or the discipline of the enemy, the more would they be inclined to think highly of that consummate skill and conduct, and that invincible intrepidity which obtained a victory over them. It was not a victory such as they saw gained by the French over the raw levies of unarmed Spanish peasants, but a victory over the veterans of France—men bred to war, inured to hardships—accustomed to conquer, and led by the most able generals of that country. At the present crisis, too, he hoped gentlemen would consider the necessity of establishing and maintaining the honour, encouraging the spirit and rewarding the services of our gallant army and its commander. When he reflected how desirable it was to cherish the military spirit, by bestowing on ability and valour the due meed and reward, he could not help again looking

for an unanimous vote on this occasion. Gentlemen, whoever they were, that might have intended to oppose this motion, would, he trusted, well weigh the reasons of their opposition, before they suffered themselves to be led into it. He intreated of them to examine their own minds, and see if they were not actuated, more or less, by party considerations, and not by feelings which should induce them to withhold their approbation from such distinguished merits of the soldier and the commander. He earnestly begged of gentlemen seriously to consider this; and so extremely anxious was he to remove out of the way every disputable matter and question which could occur, that he should carefully abstain from every thing that in his view of the subject, could, by possibility, lead to any difference of opinion. With this view he should abstain from all mention of the general plan and conduct of the campaign, as well as from every thing else connected with it likely to give rise to difference, and should bring nothing within the view of the House, but the battle of Talavera itself. He should look at it with a view solely to the consideration of the ability of the general, matched only by the gallantry of the soldier, and of the gallantry of the soldier to be equalled only by the skill, ability, and enterprise of the general. He begged it, however, to be understood, that he did not give up the vindication of the whole campaign. He should be ready to assert the merits of it, whenever called on to do so; and to maintain not only the policy of its plan and execution, but its actual utility to the general interests of the Spanish people. At present, therefore, he should only generally state the grounds on which he conceived our brave army entitled to the thanks of the House, and he would perhaps have to beg the indulgence of the House to reply to such objections as should be made. The splendid service done at Talavera was so great and so fresh in the recollection of the House, that it was unnecessary for him to go into particulars; and he should consequently confine himself to a very few facts. Lord Wellington, after his return from the north of Portugal whence he had so gallantly expelled the French under Soult, proceeded to and arrived on the Tagus on the 12th of June. Here he halted till the 27th of the same month, and then broke up from Abrantes to Plasencia. On



his march, he was joined by Cuesta, with whom he settled a combined plan of operations in order to attack Victor, drive him beyond the Alberche, and defend the south of Spain. Connected with this, a simultaneous movement on Madrid was to be made by Venegas and the army under his command. This movement, however, was not made. On the 27th, the French began the attack on the division under gen. Hill, posted upon a height. They were partially successful at first, but the manner in which they were immediately repulsed, and the position regained at the point of the bayonet, was fresh in the memory of every one, and required no eulogy from him.—On the 28th, the attack was renewed on the whole British line, and was met with equal steadiness and gallantry. Never was there a more glorious display of valour and skill than that by which an army of double their numbers was repulsed by our brave troops, and a splendid victory was obtained; a victory so decisive, so glorious, that there could not, by possibility, be a difference of opinion upon it in this country, in Spain, in Portugal, or even in France. He called, then, on the House to reward with its highest honours, this brilliant achievement, and he particularly called on a right hon. gent. whom he did not then see in his place (Mr. Windham,) to exert all his eloquence, to procure an unanimous vote on this occasion, as he had done on that of the battle of Maida, which Talavera so nearly resembled. The right hon. gent. in his eloquent speech on that occasion, told them, that their thanks were justly due and ought to be given for the invaluable acquisition of military fame and glory on that memorable day, and not to be regulated by any consideration for the attainment of ulterior objects. He was not able to excite a similar feeling by any thing he could say; but he again called on the right hon. gent. to do now what he had then done, and use his persuasive powers in obtaining an unanimous vote for Talavera, as he had for Maida, where the glory and the result were the same. Every splendour of that day was renewed and repeated at Talavera; and the same applause of the House was due to both. He would trespass no farther, but conclude by moving, "That the Thanks of this House be given to lord viscount Wellington for the distinguished ability displayed by him on the 27th

and 28th of July last, in the glorious battle of Talavera, which terminated in the signal defeat of the forces of the enemy."

Lord Milton said that though he entertained a high opinion of the gallantry of lord Wellington, and notwithstanding this was called a glorious victory, he felt himself under the necessity of proposing an amendment to the motion that had just been made. He could not consider the battle of Talavera as an isolated question, but as connected with other important topics, and the general policy and conduct of the campaign. It was not his wish to anticipate future debates, by entering into detail—and the more particularly, because he felt his incompetence to form an opinion on military topics; yet he could form an opinion, in some measure, from the event of the campaign. No one felt more strongly than he did the services, or was inclined to bestow higher praise on the valour of our troops; and he also agreed with the right hon. gent. on the necessity of encouraging their military spirit by every incitement that the approbation of that House or the gratitude of the country could supply. But he did not think this was the way to do it. They had got into the habit of voting thanks on all occasions, and it was now almost an insult not to vote them. From their frequency their Votes of Thanks lost their value, and ceased to be any longer an honour or a reward. When he looked to the result of the campaign, he saw that it was not attended with advantages, but on the contrary was highly disastrous to the country. He must take into his consideration, before he voted thanks, how it was that sir Arthur Wellesley found himself compelled to fight the enemy: it was not sufficient to say, that he got out of danger with great skill. He should have the same ability in avoiding it. What thanks would the House bestow on an admiral, who first ran his fleet among rocks and shoals, and then evinced great skill and ability in getting them off again? Yet, the case of sir Arthur Wellesley was precisely similar, he had imprudently brought his army into a critical situation—he was forced to give battle. He was attacked by the enemy; and while, in the general orders, it was styled a decisive victory, followed by a precipitate retreat, it appeared from our general's own dispatches, that the enemy retired in good order beyond the Alberche. What could his Majesty's ministers have meant by blazoning that battle in such terms of

triumph and exultation, as the dispatches of the general by no means warranted? By these Votes of Thanks, almost all administrations wished a lustre to be reflected on themselves. He did not say this was the case at present, but he had formerly seen it so. It was painful to him to say much against what he was not willing to call a victory; but yet was ready to acknowledge was highly glorious to the troops, and to the skill of the commander, on the day of action. But he could not consent to a Vote of Thanks for bravery, displayed merely in the day of battle. He had voted for the thanks on account of the battle of Vimeira; but were that vote again to give, as explained and illustrated by the battle of Talavera, he should pause before he would give it in the same way. The ambition of sir Arthur Wellesley was conspicuous in both: he seemed to have fought merely for a peerage, certainly more with such a view than was consistent with the conduct of a good and prudent commander. When they were told to consider the question as an isolated one, did the right hon. gent. mean to ask them to leave out of their consideration the 3,500 men left wounded on the field of battle, of whom 1,500 afterwards fell into the hands of the enemy? Did he mean them to leave out of their consideration, that, since the battle, our army had not been able to resume offensive operations. It was remarkable that not one dispatch from this army had been published since that dated from Truxillo, on the 21st of August. Had no dispatches been received from the army, or were ministers afraid of communicating their contents to the public? The whole campaign was wrapped in mystery, and he was determined to have information, before he voted honours. Upon all these grounds as he must protest against the Vote of Thanks to the general, he should move as an amendment, "That the Thanks of the House should be given to the officers and troops who served under lord Wellington, for their undaunted courage and gallantry on the 27th and 28th of July, in the battle of Talavera. But while the House gave this praise to the officers and men, for their undaunted courage and gallantry, they had to lament that the army since that period had been unable to resume active operations. They had also to lament, that, after the battle, they had suffered the enemy to pass two days in inactivity, without attacking them, and also for having allowed themselves to be cut off at the bridge of Arzobispo."

Mr. Vernon rose to second the amendment. The hon. gent. commenced a maiden speech of considerable ability, by expressing the high respect he entertained for the military talents and character of lord Wellington. He was ready to admit, that the country was already indebted to that noble and gallant officer for many great and signal services; and that it might justly look up to him for the performance of still more eminent services hereafter. But whilst he was thus forward to do justice to the general military merits of lord Wellington, he felt himself conscientiously bound to vote against the original motion, because whatever distinguished military talents may have been displayed during the action, he must ever condemn the temerity which had exposed a British army to the dreadful alternative of a conflict against a superior force, or absolute destruction, in a precipitate and disastrous retreat: before he should proceed more immediately to the question he felt it necessary to notice an insinuation, which had been thrown out by the right hon. gent. (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) that the gentlemen on this side of the House were actuated by party motives on this occasion, and wished by refusing the thanks of that House to the general, to cast a reflection on the ministers who had employed him. If private honour and a sense of public duty could not secure them against such a bias, motives of prudence and policy would; because unquestionably nothing could more effectually lower their character in the estimation of the public, or degrade them in their own, than such a surrender of every principle of justice and generosity to the purposes of party. When he looked to the circumstances of the action, he could not contemplate the extraordinary valour of the army without admiration; but in proportion as he admired the firmness and bravery of the army, he was bound to give way to regret, that it should have been not only unprofitably employed but unnecessarily exposed. Lord Wellington might have learned more discretion from the experience of sir John Moore's incursion into Spain; he might have derived salutary information from the recorded opinions of that great and justly lamented general; he ought to have been prevented from a precipitate advance into Spain with another British army by the example of the disastrous consequences, and unfortunate circumstances of the retreat to Corunna.

Lord Wellington had not the same excuse nor the same incitement as sir John Moore to penetrate into Spain; because he was invested with large limits of discretion, and had no officious and impertinent interference to encounter. He was not goaded on to the certain hazard and probable sacrifice of his army by the intemperate representation of a political agent, nor insulted in his own camp by the presence of a suspicious Frenchman impudently authorised to controul him in the command and disposal of his army. He had not to contend against the arrogant dictates of a rash and presumptuous diplomatist, of blind but obtrusive zeal, seeking by a display of devotion to the cause of the Junta to establish a claim to a Spanish marquisate. The campaign in Spain, however, was only a part of the general system of ministers, and it became the House therefore before it sanctioned the conduct of lord Wellington, to consider how he had acquitted himself of the responsibility reposed in him. If he could confine his view to the battle of Talavera alone, he would be sorry to disturb the unanimity of the vote; but he could not allow that it was a positive merit in a general to fight against an enemy much superior in number. On the contrary it was usually considered the part of a good general to avoid being forced into an unequal conflict. He could not allow lord Wellington to be justified by his own wrong, and consequently should not consent to thank that general for having extricated himself, with distinguished ability he would allow, but with great loss and difficulty, from the consequence of his own rashness and imprudence. Upon what ground did lord Wellington calculate that his 25,000 men would be able to cope with 100,000 Frenchmen in the heart of the Peninsula? But it had been said, that the French armies had been checked by this battle—but the real result of the battle of Talavera was, that our army was checked in its proposed march to Madrid, for which important service Joseph Buonaparté had thanked his troops. Lord Wellington had no resources equal to the accomplishment of the enterprise he had undertaken, and the real object of the march appeared to be to shelter the planners of the Expedition from the charge of impotence and inactivity, and would be well illustrated by a passage in Hudibras, concluding with the lines—

“To put the rabble in a flame,  
“And keep their governors from blame.”

It was stated that if two things had occurred, we should have succeeded better. If the Spanish Junta had not acted as they did, and if the Spanish General had done his duty, the success would have been more complete. All this, however, might have been foreseen; but if the object of the march into Spain was to attack the French army under Victor, as soon as Cuesta refused the co-operation which was promised, it was the duty of lord Wellington to have retreated. The campaign of sir John Moore was a melancholy warning of what was to be expected from penetrating into the heart of Spain. He never had looked on the situation of Spanish affairs with any very sanguine hopes; and when against the great superiority which France possessed in armies, and in able and experienced officers, the resources of Spain were stated to consist in her loyalty and religion; he feared for her fate. There were some systems of religion, such as those which inculcate predestination, that inspire an extraordinary contempt of danger; but he did not know that such was the character of that sort of religion to which the Spaniards were bigotted. Neither did he calculate much upon their loyalty to such a sovereign as Ferdinand the Seventh, who had voluntarily thrown himself into the hands of the enemy, and might be said to have resigned his crown. If he saw the crown and the altar surrounded with equal laws, and if he saw the spirit of liberty the animating principle and bond of union among Spaniards, then he should not despair of that country. He believed that was the principle which dictated the heroic resistance of Gerona and Saragossa. The exertions which the patriots of Saragossa made was not without its reward. As long as the Ebro should traverse the province of Arragon, so long would the immortal fame of the heroes of Saragossa adorn the history of the country. He was not, however, for deserting the Spaniards altogether. He would wish to send them every thing we could assist them with, except a British army. Upon all the grounds he had stated, he felt bound from a sense of his duty to second the amendment of his noble friend.

Mr. *Matthew Montagu* passed a high encomium on the eloquent display of talent, which had been made by the hon. gent. who spoke last. It was the first time that gentleman had spoken in the House, but he had evinced an ability and energy

which reflected the highest credit on his acquirements. He, however, could not help expressing his regret, that he should have chosen a subject so ill calculated to place these abilities in an eminent point of view, and have entered into a censure on a noble lord, whose services to his country had been so brilliant and so universally admitted. The hon. gent. had inveighed against the accusation of being guided merely by party feelings in forming his opinions, yet, through the whole course of his argument he had not adduced a single circumstance, nor assigned any just ground on which opposition could be fairly made to the Vote of Thanks to lord Wellington. It had been also urged, that the whole conduct of ministers had been disgraceful and impolitic. He could not see upon what basis such a charge could be founded, except from party considerations. What had been their conduct with respect to Spain? They saw a free people struggling for their liberty, and with an alacrity which conferred on them the highest credit, they endeavoured to supply those requisites which were necessary to promote their success; they wanted a military commander—one was sent; they wanted troops—troops were sent; they wanted money—money was sent; and they wanted good counsel, which was also given them; but the hon. gent. said they had neither religion, patriotism, nor politics to guide them in this conduct. When it was determined that a military officer should be sent to Spain and lord Wellington had arrived there; he would ask, would it be prudent for that officer to remain hovering on the coast, and not endeavour to drive the enemy from the heart of the country? Was he to remain inactive; or in what manner was he to assist our allies? Was it not expedient that he should form a co-operation with the Spaniards, and did he not adopt such plans as were most likely to be attended with ultimate success? Surely if a failure took place in consequence of a want of energy and unanimity in the Spaniards, such a circumstance was not to detract from the glory of lord Wellington's achievements, nor dim that lustre which the brilliancy of his actions had reflected on his military character. That gallant lord was not answerable for such failures. He could only rely on his own skill, he set a noble example to our allies, and endeavoured to instill into their hearts that spirit which could alone

enable them to resist the despotism of a tyrant. His exertions were unhappily distinguished by no lasting success, and the effect of his operations was destroyed by the pusillanimity of his co-operating forces. This, however, could not be deemed a ground of objection to him. In the field of Talavera, he had performed wonders: surrounded by every difficulty he fought and conquered a French force of twice the magnitude of his own, and placed the character of the British arms on a basis of superiority unequalled by all the world. The hon. gent. then entered into a discussion of the conduct of ministers, which he said was guided only by that patriotic desire for the interests of their country that had distinguished their administration. He saw no ground of complaint, nor had they any reason to be ashamed of the policy they had adopted. They stood up in the face of the country in support of the cause of England and of Europe against the despotic sway of an usurper, and had followed the principles of that great statesman, Mr. Pitt, by wisely keeping the war at a distance from their own door. He concluded with a declaration of his admiration of the talents and character of lord Wellington, and of his most hearty concurrence in the original motion.

General Tarleton never rose with feelings of more pain than on this occasion; because he meant to oppose the vote of thanks to a brother officer. He begged leave to begin his speech by saying a few words of himself. He had been attacked with the foulest obloquy, for the part he had taken with respect to the Vote of Thanks for the battle of Vimiera; but he could assure the House, that his conduct in that instance had been, as it would be in this, dictated by feelings of duty and a love for his profession. Lord Wellington appeared to him to have advanced into Spain upon his own responsibility; and he would ask any hon. gent. who heard him, whether he had acted the part of a prudent general in having done so? It was obvious that his object was to have moved upon Madrid; because Joseph Buonaparte would not have brought his body guards to support Victor, nor left Madrid with a hostile population and without any adequate force to keep down that population, if not for the purpose of covering his capital. General Junot had done the same, when he advanced against sir Arthur Wellesley in Portugal. When lord Wel-

lington arrived at Talavera, and formed a junction with Cuesta, he was in want of stores, means of transport, food, and provender; but if he had advanced upon Madrid, he would have encountered more difficulties, and sustained multiplied loss. The allied army consisted of about 50,000 men; the Spaniards occupying the right, and the English the centre and left. The Spanish position was covered by vineyards in front, which enabled them to repulse the attack of the enemy, which commenced upon the right. No man could say that this repulse was not of great service to the English army, because, if the Spanish position had been forced, it was clear that the right of the English army would have been turned; and general Cuesta had acted with wisdom in not advancing from his position into broken ground, where he would have been exposed to the superior manœuvres of the enemy. Having dwelt at some length on the circumstances of the battle, the hon. general contended, that upon the whole it was to be considered a repulse but not a defeat of the enemy, because the French continued in their positions two days after the action. He next came to the accounts of the action contained in the dispatches of lord Wellington, which were he must contend vain-glorious, partial, and incorrect. Vain-glorious, as every man who read them would perceive; partial, because, though they contained some praise of the Spaniards, that praise was not adequate to their services; and incorrect, because almost every line contained a statement which the circumstances of the case did not bear out. But he would ask what had been said, and what done, and what represented by the ministerial prints, and rumours at the time? The battle of Talavera was compared to that of Agincourt. But in the latter, the situation of the king before the battle was perilous, and by the victory he gained a crown. Whereas by the battle of Talavera Ferdinand the Seventh lost a crown. It had been said in another place, that the actions of lord Wellington were as glorious as those of the illustrious ancestors of any noble peer. That brought him to the consideration of the great duke of Marlborough, who had carried the military glory of this country to the highest pitch. The hon. general then enumerated the distinguishing features of the battles of Blenheim and Malplaquet, in order to show that the battle of Talavera was not

to be compared with either. The most important advantages were the result of the victories of the immortal Marlborough, but what benefit had been derived from the boasted victory of Talavera? Had lord Wellington made a movement in advance to follow up the victory? Had he not been obliged to a precipitate retreat after abandoning his sick and wounded, and exposing the Spanish army to the danger of having its retreat cut off? He was convinced that lord Wellington had been deficient in information, both as to the amount and situation of Soult's army, and as to the extent of those armies with which he was nearly surrounded; and though he was ready to do every justice that his feeble language could enable him, to the brilliant valour, steady discipline, and persevering gallantry of the generals, field officers, and troops who fought under him, he could lay his hand upon his heart and say, that he could not conscientiously vote, that the Thanks of that House should be given to lord Wellington.

Lord Castlereagh said, he was sure it would not be considered extraordinary by the House, that he rose, upon the present occasion, to offer some remarks. It was impossible that he should not feel, in common with the House, the weight which any objections must have in such a case, when coming from an hon. general, who must be supposed to carry all those professional partialities about him, which would disincline him from obstructing, without strong grounds indeed, the honours of a distinguished brother officer. It was impossible not to hesitate, when the gallant general in the discharge of a public duty felt himself called upon, not only to refuse the thanks of that House to lord Wellington, but even to lend his countenance to the attempt to convert a vote of thanks into the heaviest censure that could be passed upon a most meritorious officer. He must protest in the outset against the practice of referring to the operations of a whole campaign on a question confined to the merits of a single but glorious and memorable action. But whilst he thus protested against such a principle, he felt that he should be doing great injustice to lord Wellington, if he omitted to enter upon the consideration of the whole campaign, the merits of which were such as to reflect the highest honour upon that noble officer. In April, lord Wellington found himself at the head of 25,000 men in Portugal. His instructions

directed him to rescue and defend Portugal, but he was at liberty to combine, and co-operate in the execution of a plan of operations with any of the Spanish generals in command of the armies in the adjoining provinces, always however looking to the defence of Portugal as the grand object of the Expedition and the most important duty he had to perform. Soult at that period occupied the North, whilst Victor, after having beaten Cuesta at Medellin, menaced the South of that kingdom. The wish to drive the enemy out of Portugal attracted his attention to the North: the entreaties of Cuesta invited him to act against Victor; and his own anxiety to carry into speedy and full effect the instructions under which he was to act, rendered the option difficult. He, however, decided for the North, leaving 12,000 men, under general McKenzie, on the Tagus to watch the motions of the enemy in that quarter. He should not dwell upon the merits of the brilliant manner in which that service was performed; because, though there might be persons in this country who might dispute the question, the enemy had done ample justice to the merits of that decisive operation by comparing it to the most brilliant achievements of their own emperor. After this signal service lord Wellington returned towards the South with the same celerity, which had marked his victorious progress against Soult. If he had then remained inactive at Abrantes, what would have been the feeling of his country? What, indeed, had actually been that feeling? Did not gentlemen remember how lord Wellington had been run down for his inactivity during the short time he remained at Abrantes to recruit and refresh his army? They all saw from the statement in the public papers, from the very voice of the country at large, the impatience with which that short interval of repose was regarded; the universal cry was, "why did he stay at Abrantes?" He mentioned this circumstance, not to shew that the public cry should have any effect upon an officer, charged with the execution of an important trust, but merely to exemplify what difficulties an officer, so circumstanced, had to contend with, when the public voice might be urging him to an act which might afterwards be questioned, and imputed to him as an error. But if lord Wellington had advanced from Abrantes before the harvest had been collected in, neither his own troops, nor

those of Spain, with which he was to co-operate, could possibly have found subsistence.

The principle upon which lord Wellington had acted and was expressly instructed to act, was in the first instance to provide for the defence of Portugal, by the expulsion of the French corps from that country. Having accomplished that object, he was bound to co-operate with Cuesta, so far as that was practicable without losing sight of the defence of Portugal. In proceeding to Talavera. Lord Wellington expected to give such a shock to Victor's corps, that it would not easily recover from, before he should be re-summoned to the defence of the north of Portugal. This advance to co-operate with Cuesta, for the purpose of securing for the Spaniards the line of defence on the Lower Tagus, was connected with the main object of relieving Portugal from the pressure of Victor's army. The victory he gained gave to Spain the line of the Tagus, had the effect of producing the evacuation of the Northern provinces, and enabled our allies to rescue from the grasp of their invaders, the fleet stationed at Ferrol, which was now safely moored at Cadiz. If lord Wellington had not been prevented by the inactivity of the Spanish general, from attacking Victor on the 23d, there was every reason to suppose that he would have obtained a glorious and decisive victory, in which case the junction which had afterwards been effected of French corps would have been prevented, and the allied army in a condition to make head against the enemy in any direction. But though lord Wellington had advanced into Spain under a determination to co-operate with Cuesta only so far as was compatible with the security of Portugal, he was not bound necessarily to avoid Madrid if a favourable opportunity of effecting a decisive blow there, should have been presented to him. Besides he could state it as a positive fact that before he left Abrantes, he had heard of the battle of Aspern, and must naturally have concluded, that that was the moment at which Spain would be likely to make an effort for her liberties, if any effort she was determined to make. His object, therefore, was to assist Spain as much as possible in that most critical juncture, and, at the same time, to keep in view the defence of Portugal, which was the principal object of his attention: and so far was he from abandoning that

object on his advance into Spain, that, as he had already stated, he told Cuesta that he could not go farther with him than the Alberche, until he should be apprised of the situation and designs of the French armies in the North. So, far, therefore, from being ignorant upon this point, or having acted without the necessary intelligence, as he had been charged with, he actually limited his operations, in consequence of his information.—He had now brought the operations down to the situation of the British Army at Talavera, previous to the battle. Not only the Spanish army under Cuesta was to have co-operated with the British army with which it had formed a junction, but the corps of Venegas, as Cuesta informed lord Wellington, was to move simultaneously upon Arganda, and make a diversion in favour of the operations of the allied army. Instead, however, of proceeding in that direction which would have enabled Venegas to prevent General Sebastiani's force from uniting with Victor's, he unfortunately advanced to Toledo, which left the enemy at liberty to concentrate all his forces and bring the whole combined to bear upon the British Army. Here he would beg of those gentlemen, who regarded the movement of lord Wellington as so rash, to look a little at the movement of Soult, and consider but for a moment the peculiar circumstances that attended it. It might not be unnecessary, in passing, to state that the force of Soult on his advance to Piacentia, did not consist of 70,000 but of 34,000 men, and that not more than 4,000 of them belonged to Soult's original corps, being the whole that escaped with him from the North of Portugal without baggage, artillery, or ammunition. The army of Soult then was composed principally of the corps of Ney and Mortier, and the corps which had been stationed at Burgos, the command of all which when united necessarily devolved upon Soult, in consequence of his being senior Marshal to Ney and Mortier. With this concentrated force Soult proceeded to the South, evacuating the North of Spain, where he left the Gallician army in his rear. He then passed by the corps of the Duke del Parque at Ciudad Rodrigo, whilst he was flanked by the Portuguese army 15,000 strong under Marshal Beresford at Campo Majoran, the Spanish frontier. It would be obvious upon the slightest consideration that this advance of Soult was an extremely ha-

zardous movement, and not to have been expected upon any sound military principles. Lord Wellington, therefore, would not have been justified in contracting the sphere of his own operations from any apprehension of a movement on the part of Soult under such circumstances of peril and discouragement. So far, then, from being liable to the charge of rashness, lord Wellington's conduct he would contend was characterised by consummate skill, energy, and prudence. He had never put himself in a situation from which he might not at any time have been able to regain his former position in Portugal. The line of his march placed him in a condition either to fight Victor and Sebastiani, or to attack Soult in the possible event of his advancing upon him. Whatever might be the course of the campaign the judicious choice of his position enabled lord Wellington to play the great game, he had to manage, with advantage. The course pursued by Soult had not come upon him by surprise. Lord Wellington was fully aware, that, however improbable, such a movement was not impossible, and consequently without contemplating its certainty, had taken measures to meet every contingency. He had concerted with Marshal Beresford the means of rendering the Portuguese army instrumental in defeating or retarding the progress of Soult, if he should attempt to move towards the South. The strong pass of the Puerto Pico was guarded by a Portuguese force, whilst the Spaniards undertook to defend the pass of Banos: and if the latter had maintained their position, Soult would not have been able to bear against the allied army. But the British army had never been so closely pressed by the force under Soult as gentlemen seemed to think. The retreat of lord Wellington was regular and un molested, and consequently it was not true that he had been hotly pursued by Soult. It was certainly true that Soult moved along the same line with him; and if he waited for Soult, Soult must as certainly have overtaken him; but there being no danger of that, on the contrary, there being always a long interval between them, no pressure could be said to exist. There was nothing therefore upon the face of the campaign to deprive lord Wellington of his well-earned honours.—(Hear! hear!) —There was nothing that could impeach his prudence, or expose him to the charge of audacity and rashness, beyond that

spirit of enterprise which a British commander ought to possess. A battle more distinguished he did not know of in the military annals of this country; for, however the hon. general might call their attention to battles, too remote to be perfectly understood, he would defy him to point out, in modern times, one of a more brilliant and distinguished character. It would require more ingenuity to do this, than the hon. general appeared to him to have yet displayed. Never, perhaps, was so close an action, so vigorously maintained or so long contested. It often was the case that some fortunate event suddenly and unexpectedly turned the fate of the field, without any long continued exertion of the powers of the armies; the battle of Talavera was not of that description, as every inch of ground was disputed, and it was by a long and bloody perseverance, and that against superior numbers, that the fortune of the day was decided. By the same unfortunate fatality, however, by which Spanish councils were characterised the advantage of the victory was not improved. The attack was commenced at one o'clock in the day, and it was at the close of evening that that great exploit in the recovery of his former position was performed by general Hill, which was, no doubt, in their recollections. Night interrupted the conflict, and the two armies remained in their positions in sight of each other waiting the return of light to renew the battle. It was during that awful interval that the distinguished general at the head of the British army enjoyed some repose, and sound it was known to have been, a repose, which none but a great man could enjoy during the short but anxious intermission of an obstinate and sanguinary battle. From this sound repose lord Wellington rose in the morning of the 28th to a renewal of the engagement and a further display of his own ability and the resistless intrepidity of his gallant army. The contest was then continued till twelve o'clock, when an interval of two hours rest from the work of destruction, was employed by the troops on both sides in removing their respective dead from the scene of action; and then it was that those whose arms were before uplifted for mutual havoc met at the stream which intervened between their mutual positions, and shook hands in token of their reciprocal admiration of the bravery, and skill and firmness displayed on both sides.

He had to congratulate the country upon the restoration of that generous feeling and high spirit which had heretofore characterised the conduct of soldiers in civilised warfare.—He congratulated the country on this circumstance; he congratulated the world, that, in these days, the rage of war did not subdue and extinguish those feelings of generosity which were the ornament of human nature; and that if some of our brave troops did fall into the hands of the enemy, they fell into the hands of an enemy who knew how to respect them. To say that such an effort of skill and ability, such an acquisition of British glory, was not calculated to call forth the admiration of the House of Commons, was an attempt to introduce a feeling into that House, which he conceived it the duty of every member to resist. The loss of that day was much dwelt upon—the loss of that day he regretted as much as any man, but he deprecated that mode of painful searching, which was calculated to injure and unnerve the military energy of the country; if such feelings were to become general, they would be reduced to the necessity of ceasing altogether from opposition to the French, and giving up the character which they were so well calculated to maintain—that of a great military power. But the gentlemen who dwelt so anxiously upon this head, were in the habit of running away from the fact. There was no circumstance more to the honour of lord Wellington, than that such a difficult and enterprising campaign was concluded with such little comparative loss. This was the proudest testimony which could be given of the talents of a Commander. He should feel it his duty, at a future day, to call for the returns; at present, if he might credit what he had heard, without consulting them, our loss during the whole campaign in Portugal and Spain, including the 1,500 wounded, who fell into the hands of the enemy, did not exceed 6,000 men. So that lord Wellington had performed a march of 1200 miles, and fought a battle, unexampled for its heroism, with a loss which, under the circumstances, must be considered trifling. On the contrary, what was the loss of the enemy; that enemy, whose fate gentlemen were so much in the habit of contrasting with lord Wellington's? The enemy's loss did not amount to less than 10,000 men. He hoped that they should never again hear of such contrasts, unless they were drawn



in favour of the British general. Soult, with all the eulogiums pronounced upon his retreat, did not carry with him a single cannon and but a third of his army from Portugal. There was one topic more, to which he should advert; which was the dignity conferred upon lord Wellington, in the title conferred by his Majesty. The hon. general had said, that he fought for it at Talavera, he, lord C. would say, that he had fought for it all over the world; it was not in Talavera alone his fame was established, he had fought in all quarters, generally opposed by greater numbers, but always victorious. He did not know how honours could be more usefully bestowed, than upon such men and such services; and so long as the principle upon which he was advanced was acted upon, there was no likelihood of the peerage being disgraced. It was true, and fortunate for the country, that honours were frequently bestowed, during the late and present wars, for great military excellence; but that was rather a proof of the talents and bravery of the country, than of the debasement of its honours. While they lamented the losses inevitable in war, let them also remember the advantages—let them remember that the army, with its present experience, was worth tenfold what it was before, and that if, from an unlucky circumstance, it had failed in its object, in no one instance had it been defeated or disgraced. We now appeared before the eyes of Europe, not merely as we had been heretofore considered, a mere naval power, we were also a military one; recognized as such by an enemy, who had experienced our might in our victories, and those often, when, with inferior numbers, we beat the best and most experienced of his troops. Upon the whole view of the case, he deprecated the notion, that the country was disgraced, and thought, that, for every reason on which it became them to decide, they should agree in giving the thanks to lord Wellington.

Mr. *Whitbread* congratulated lord Wellington that he had found such an able panegyrist as the noble lord who had just spoken, and the noble lord himself, on the display of eloquence he had made, which, if not contradicted by the dispatches themselves, might have amounted to a defence of his own conduct while in office. He (Mr. W.) was not one of those whom the noble lord had described as too vehement in lamentation; at the

same time, he could not withhold a tear when he thought of the fate of so many brave soldiers, and the quantity of British blood that had been spilt in a sacrifice to incapacity and folly. They were told, in a whimsical way, that the English were niggards of applause to those who had fought their battles; but he would appeal from the charge to the fact; from the accuser to the history of the country. Was there ever a period when merit was more liberally rewarded than by this generous people, during the last and present wars? There was no man of those, whose political sentiments he disapproved whom he would oppose so reluctantly, as the very distinguished officer he was now compelled to oppose. The noble lord had mixed up the general with the army, and then demanded whether such actions as had been performed should be refused the thanks of parliament? With an utter contempt of dates, he had made a case, unsupported by events, to bolster up his own statement. He (Mr. W.) was no military man; but when he could oppose the noble lord, upon the authority of lord Wellington himself, he thought he might venture to dispute the points with him. The noble lord had stated, that the principal object was the defence of Portugal; he believed it was not. He also spoke of the expulsion of Soult, and drew a comparison between the British and French commanders. They were not to try Soult, but they were to try lord Wellington, with respect to his claim upon the thanks of that House. It had been said, that lord Wellington had heard of the battles of Aspern and Esling, while at Abrantes, but how could he think that that battle would operate to draw off the French at such a distance? But did the noble lord mean to say, that the French were unprovided with magazines? Was it the practice of Buonaparté to be so?—At all events, if the noble lord could issue his orders, with such effect, in the different countries through which he passed, he then might proceed without magazines, and provide himself as he advanced. But the contrary was the case; his army was famishing. It had been mentioned, somewhere, as an honour to the general, that he conquered, with half-famished troops, the well-fed and luxurious troops of the enemy. Could a greater charge be brought against him? Why did he take them there to be famished. But it seemed he had instructions that were dis-

claimed before; they were now avowed, however, in order to afford some credit to the Portland administration, to enable them to say, "this is the greatest general—that was the greatest army, in the world—and it was we who sent them out!". On forming the junction with Cuesta, they were to attack the enemy the next day, but found that he was gone. But while lord Wellington accused general Cuesta of delay, he ought to have stated the grounds of it; and, in not doing so, he did that general an injustice. As to the attack upon general M' Kenzie's party in the wood, it had every appearance of being unexpected. The Spaniards, to whom he allowed no praise, whom he represented as taking no part in the battle, he was nevertheless necessitated to mention no less than five times in his dispatch; and it was rather too much to say, that he had contended with double his number. He had even mentioned a Spanish general, who was wounded in bringing up his inactive infantry to assist in the battle. There were, undoubtedly, prodigies of valour displayed by the British; but even in the famous charge of the 23d regiment of dragoons he thought that the general was much to blame.—There was almost a gulph between them and the enemy, when they made the charge, and many were lost in consequence. This should have been known before: the ground should have been reconnoitred. Lord Wellington had bravery; he had skill upon other occasions; but that he should be thanked, as a skilful commander for his conduct upon that day, he would deny. He himself had called the victory a repulse, and the name was more appropriate. It was the intention to march to Madrid, and even to fight a battle beyond it. He could not conceive why Ferrol should be evacuated in consequence of the battle of Talavera. He denied that there was any other retreat for the army than that through Deileitosa; and represented their condition as most deplorable, many of them not having tasted food for eight and forty hours previous to the battle, and hundreds having perished on the road, from mere famine, during the retreat. He would not agree to give a premium to rashness. The Spanish cause was now more hopeless than ever. Where, then, was the advantage of the victory? He could not agree that the army was become stronger since, than before its losses, and regarded our late continental efforts,

as calculated to sink the military character of the country, though they had raised that of the soldiery, whose gallantry was indisputable.

General Craufurd vindicated the military character of lord Wellington, and said they might as well accuse him of not being able to answer the first question in the catechism, as of ignorance or precipitation. He had displayed, on the contrary, the greatest skill, though his plan had not succeeded to the utmost extent, owing to Sebastiani's corps not having been detained by Venegas. The Spaniards had not taken his advice as they ought. He was a most consummate general, and deserved the greatest honours the country could bestow.

General Stewart wished to make a few remarks on one or two points touching the conduct of the battle of Talavera. Lord Wellington had projected an attack on the army of Victor on the 23d, which, had it been acceded to by general Cuesta, must have terminated in the annihilation of that corps. On the 24th Victor retreated, and was pursued as far as Olala. On the 26th the Spanish army retreated to the left bank of the Alberche, and then it was that the dispositions made by lord Wellington not only secured the subsequent glorious victory to his own troops, but preserved the Spanish army. It had been observed that lord W. did not expect the battle; in the first instance he did not: how could he when Victor had retreated? It was the Spanish army brought them back upon him, and then his presence of mind furnished a barrier to every difficulty. As to his personal conduct he could only say, that he was every where during the fight, and always in the hottest of the action; and in expressing his approbation of the motion, he was sure he but expressed what was the general feeling of the army.

Mr. Windham observed, that the arguments he had heard did not divest him of the opinion, that the battle of Talavera was a glorious victory. Honourable gentlemen on the opposite side spoke of feeling: he believed, when the victory was first announced in this country, there was not a man but gloried in it. He was afraid we had got too much military special pleading, that would argue merely on the result, not the valour and generalship shewn. It put him in mind of a story of a wag, who was asked, how he came by a visible fracture on his face? "Why, I beat him, and he beat me, but I gave in

"first;" so with the French, as the victory was claimed on both sides; but they came first, and were repulsed. In the case of a fortress, the garrison could not do more than repulse the army that invaded it; that is, the enemy left it when they pleased; and were they not to be thanked for preserving the fortress against a superior enemy, although not able to follow them? Then, would you say, lord Wellington did not gain a victory, because he was not able to harass them in their retreat? He had heard, in the course of debate, what had been done, and what might have been done; but was it necessary that a problem in Euclid, which had been proved, should be called in question in that House. Then it had been substantiated that the battle of Talavera was a victory; and why should they prevent it from operating on their minds as such? They had no advantage from the victory of Corunna, except that the army were able to save themselves. If lord Wellington had acted imprudently before the battle, it ought not to retract or withdraw as much as the weight of a feather from the victory he had obtained. It had been argued, that, although he might be an able general in battle, yet he was not capable of conducting a campaign, for he had not secured a retreat. Such arguments proved themselves to be altogether fallacious; for he had shewn that he had a retreat, and that too by retreating in safety, after shewing that he could do something. The right hon. gent. then proceeded to state, that although France had generals of great skill, yet had they not run great risks, and secured a battle, that the breaking of a thread might have prevented them from achieving? But to take a view of the question under the general head, the unproductive consequences were not to be put in comparison with the military glory we had obtained. It might be asked, would an engagement, that only acquired military glory, prove advantageous to the country? He would answer, yes; if military valour was necessary for national strength; and he conceived it of much more service to the nation at large, than the taking of a sugar island, or a ship at sea: 10 or 15 years ago, their army was considered as nought; it was thought, on the continent, that we might do something at sea; that we were a kind of sea animal. Our achievements in Egypt first entitled us to the name of a military power; the battle of Maida con-

firmed it; and he would not give the battles of Vimeira, Corunna, and Talavera, for a whole Archipelago of sugar islands. The whole feelings and powers of the country had changed in their military capacity. They began to feel they wanted something more than a navy to support them. There never was an action in this world, but some persons might sit down and investigate it, and find some fault; but they were not to give credit to the critics. He was sorry that such a letter as had been sent by lord Wellington to the government had ever been written. As to the Spaniards, he believed it set forth nothing but what was true; but it went to proclaim glory which did not belong to him. It was like a sea engagement. And as it could not be contended that the hull of a vessel had nothing to do with the guns which gained the victory; or like a spear that inflicted a wound, could it be said that the staff was not of service? so with the Spanish army; they did all that was required of them, they kept their position. The victory in itself must have been of use to the Spanish cause, for it shewed them that a British army was invincible, and the victory well deserved the honour of the reward moved to be bestowed on it by that House.

Mr. *Lyttleton* concurred in the vote of thanks; but asked, what would have been the situation of the army, if ministers had given the same kind of discretion to a commander of a less enterprising and active spirit?

Mr. *C. Adams* spoke in favour of the question.

General *Montagu Mathew* gave his most hearty concurrence to the vote of thanks to his noble friend; and added that he was proud he could call him countryman, whose glorious and great achievements he could only compare to those of marshal Lannes.

Mr. *Ponsonby* said, he was aware that the vote he should give would not be consonant with the feelings of the House. He knew little of military affairs, and he believed the major part of the House were in the same situation; yet they were the persons who were to approve or disapprove. He did not wish, at that late hour of the night, to enter into the merits of the battle of Talavera; but this he knew, the British troops fought, and were not able to maintain their ground. He thought the victories in Egypt and Maida were sufficient to establish our military fame,

without sending lord Wellington to hazard the treasure of the country, the valuable lives of their soldiers, where no possible good could result from it. That the battle of Talavera was fought with intrepidity, no man could doubt. But the duties of a soldier and a general were very different. The first, inspired with the duty and love he owed his country, was willing to undergo all privations, was even careless of his life; where danger was there he flew; but the duty of a commander was quite different. He ought to be careful that the soldier should suffer no privations, that he should not endanger his life without actual necessity, and unless the service of his country required it. Was lord Wellington thus careful? This was a plain fact, on which every man of understanding could come to a conclusion, whether vested with military knowledge or not. He would not detract from the merits of those who fought under lord Wellington; he was sensible they did as much as men could do, and no honour their country could confer on them would be equal to their deserts. He concluded by saying, that he would give his support to the amendment.

Mr. *Canning* felt it impossible to conceive why assent to the motion should be withheld. On no other provocation, than that government had called on the House to speak the sentiments of gratitude which warmed almost every heart in the country, the House was required, through the medium of the proposed amendment, to censure the noble lord whose conduct was the subject of discussion, and to pronounce him, instead of the exalter of the honour of his country, the wanton waster of her best blood. He lamented the loss that had taken place in the battle of Talavera as much as any man; but war was a game that could not be played without risks and losses. It had been said that the House had been too prodigal of their approbation in recent times. We lived in an age so full of splendid achievements, that it was feared the spring of honour might be dried up. This was indeed a source of high exultation, and one in which he trusted the country would long have to indulge.

Lord *Folkestone* supported the amendment.

Sir *T. Turton* rose, amidst a loud call for the question, and said a few words in avour of the Vote of Thanks.

Strangers were then ordered to with-

draw: but the House did not divide, of course the Vote of Thanks to lord Wellington was carried. After which the House resolved,—1. "That the Thanks of this House be given to lieutenant-general sir John Cope Sherbrooke, knight of the most honourable order of the bath, to lieutenant-general William Payne, to lieutenant-general sir Stapleton Cotton, baronet, to lieutenant-general Rowland Hill, to major-general Christopher Tilson, to brigadier-general Alexander Campbell, to brigadier-general Henry Frederick Campbell, to brigadier-general Richard Stewart, to brigadier-general the hon. Charles Stewart, to brigadier-general Alan Cameron, to brigadier-general Henry Fane, to brigadier-general George Anson, and to brigadier-general Edward Howorth, and the several other officers, for their distinguished exertions on the 27th and 28th of July last, in the memorable battle of Talavera, which terminated in the signal defeat of the forces of the enemy.—2. That this House doth highly approve of, and acknowledge, the distinguished valour and discipline displayed by the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers of the forces serving on the 27th and 28th of July last, under the command of lieutenant-general lord viscount Wellington, in the glorious victory obtained at Talavera; and that the same be signified to them by the commanding officers of the several corps, who are desired to thank them for their gallant and exemplary conduct."

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#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Friday, February 2.*

[CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.] The Speaker having quitted the chair, previous to the House going into a Committee of Ways and Means,

Mr. *W. Smith*, addressing himself to Mr. *Ley*, the clerk, begged to say a few words to the House.

The *Speaker* begged to inform the House, in point of order, that if a difference of opinion arose on the subject of who should be called to the chair, it could not be discussed in that incomplete state in which the House then was.

Mr. *W. Smith* said, he did not know how else to conduct himself, a gentleman being about to take the chair without any question put to the House.

The *Speaker* said, if one gentleman should be called to the chair of the Committee, and another should be proposed

from some other quarter, it would then become his duty to take the chair of the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then called on Mr. Lushington to take the chair; and

Mr. W. Smith called on Mr. Davies Giddy.

The *Speaker* immediately returned to the chair, and said, that now was the time to propose who should be chairman of the Committee.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said it had been the uniform practice of the House, of late years, to have the office of Chairman of the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means filled by one individual, who continued during the course of the session, and accordingly a salary was annexed to the performance of that duty. He believed there was not an instance to the contrary on the journals. He also contended, that when the House was about to resolve into a Committee of Supply, not into a Committee of Ways and Means, was the proper time for agitating who that chairman should be. This question had, however, been already settled, when Mr. Lushington was, on a former day, called to the chair of the Committee of Supply. No change in such an appointment ever took place in the course of one session. If this House did not observe a uniform practice in this respect, it would become an every day discussion. He accordingly moved that Mr. Lushington be called to the chair.

Mr. W. Smith said, if in what the right hon. gent. had stated to have happened, the convenience and dignity of the House had been as much attended to, as he had no doubt its rules had been consulted, the House would have heard nothing from him at present on the subject. The sole reason he had for objecting to the hon. gent. proposed was, that, however respectable in every other particular, he did not possess those qualifications to be looked for in a Chairman of the Committee of Supply, or of Ways and Means. Experience was the qualification principally required. The first chairman he recollected was Mr. Gilbert, a gentleman of great experience; the next was Mr. Hobart, an old member, and also a gentleman of great experience; the next was Mr. Hobhouse, whose recall to the chair would be attended with great advantage to the House; to him succeeded Mr. Alexander, who had held the same office in the parliament of Ireland; and

the last was the hon. gent. opposite (Mr. Wharton,) now promoted to what was esteemed a higher office. and who, when in the Chair of the Committee, had acquitted himself with great propriety. He asked, what were the qualifications requisite for such a situation? They were not those of a debater. It was not quickness or fluency that was required; but such an experience arising from a number of years acquaintance with that House, as should enable a person to come to the Chair of the Committee, not to learn the business, but to practise what he had learned; so that he might be able to command attention, and to exercise becoming authority. The *Speaker* himself, he apprehended, was not taken at random from among the members of that House to fill the high station he had so many years honourably filled. He was not a child of the minister of the day; but was selected in consequence of his having long applied himself to a knowledge of the business of parliament, which it was thought he might exercise to the advantage of the country, and that those expectations had not been disappointed, that House and the country could now bear witness. Did the hon. gent. proposed by ministers possess any of these advantages? Suppose a dispute on a point of order, were to arise in the Committee of Ways and Means between two members of 20, 30, or 40 years standing, what authority would the decision of the hon. gent. carry along with it? He agreed that it was natural for the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* to propose for the situation one of his own friends; but, at the same time, he should consider who was fit for the office, rather than for whom the office was fit. He should have been disposed to call Mr. Hobhouse again to the chair; but there were reasons against it. He had resigned, and the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* did not consult him, not considering him as his political friend. Impartiality was to his mind necessary, if it could be had; and as, in a manner, the deputy of the *Speaker*, it would be desirable that some part of his impartiality should be extended to the Chair of the Committee. This, however, was not to be expected from gentlemen who uniformly voted with ministers; and in proposing his hon. friend he knew that he pointed out a man who would exercise the strictest impartiality to all parties. He concluded by proposing Mr. Davies Giddy.

Mr. Giddy expressed his extreme sur-

prize at the proposition of his hon. friend, of which he had not received the most distant intimation. He assured the House that, in occasionally acting during the last session for his hon. friend, who then filled the Chair of the Committee, he had no view to the filling of that situation himself. He should feel awkward were he placed in that situation by gentlemen acting in hostility to ministers. He wished they would name some person else; and begged that he might be understood as no party to what was past.

Mr. *Wharton* thought it was not long experience, but a sort of technical knowledge which was required for the situation. He was satisfied the hon. gent. (*Lushington*) was fully qualified for it.

Mr. *Ponsonby* was sorry an hon. gent. (Mr. *Hobhouse*) could not be prevailed on to return to the Chair of the Committees. As the other hon. gent. also chose to decline it, he begged of his hon. friend not to press his amendment.

Mr. *W. Smith*, after vindicating himself from the charge of attempting to take the House by surprize, agreed to withdraw the amendment, when the House resolved into the Committee, and Mr. *Lushington* was called to the chair.

[EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.] Lord *Porchester*, before he moved the order of the day, rose to give notice, that on Monday he would move for certain papers, which he thought were necessary to render those already before the House complete. In those before them two or three objects were named as those proposed to be obtained by the Expedition; while one part of the force was to be stationed as a garrison in *Walcheren*, the other was to proceed to accomplish such of the ulterior objects of the Expedition as might appear practicable. But could it be thought, that when the Expedition sailed, that no plan, no instructions, save those in the general orders, were given? From the papers before them it appeared, that a very few days after the noble lord opposite had stated that in consequence of the seasonable fall of *Flushing* every obstacle to the accomplishment of the ulterior objects of the Expedition was removed, the whole of those objects were abandoned. Could it be thought that the general had received no instructions in the interval to influence his conduct? He was of opinion that such communications must have existed, and as they were not produced, he must consider those papers before the House as defective

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and incomplete; he should therefore give notice, that on Monday he would move, That certain papers relating to the late Expedition to the Scheldt be laid before the House.

Lord *Castlereagh* took the earliest opportunity of promoting the inquiry. When that subject was adverted to before he was unfortunately absent, and nothing had been said till then that could justify him in coming forward with that information it might be in his power to give. He was then prepared to state, that the War office did not contain all that was necessary to give the noble lord the information he required. It was impossible for persons employed on such a service to act wholly from documents, and all the information that could be derived from documents would not proceed from the war department; it would be his duty hereafter to state where such information might be found. The inquiry, it would appear at the outset, naturally divided itself into two branches, and he wished to know to which the House first proposed to direct their attention. With respect to the policy of the Expedition, but a comparatively small portion of information could be derived from papers that might be laid before the House. Those considerations which influenced his Majesty's government would have some weight with them when deciding on the policy of the measure into which they were about to inquire. He would have to consider if the country was so circumstanced that such an effort might be made without too much impairing our resources. The presumable expence was also to be considered, and whether the calculations had been exceeded. The situation in which we stood with our allies was also to be remembered, though that consideration, with respect to *Austria*, might be too delicate a subject to be openly discussed; but of that his Majesty's ministers were the most competent judges. The House was probably not aware of the great extent of evidence necessary to enable them to decide on the policy, and to judge of the grounds on which the late Expedition was undertaken. He should feel it to be his duty to call for such documents and such evidence as might be required, as the inquiry proceeded. He supposed from the evidence the noble lord had summoned, that it was his intention first to proceed to the execution of the Expedition. If that were the case, and if the policy or expediency of the measure were

not at first brought before the House, he should feel it to be his duty to move at the same period of the inquiry for information on that subject. It would be presumption in him to lay before the House the case of the commanders or of ministers. He was glad the noble lord could not find the plan and the instructions he expected in the papers before the House. The grounds of the instructions on which the army were to act, were contained under the Sign Manual, and were of a general nature. They did not pretend to travel far into the detail of what was to regulate the conduct of the general. On the face of the admiralty instructions it would be seen they went more into the detail. The reason was, the admiralty being a professional Board were capable of instructing their officers how to act, which ministers could not do when sending out a general officer with a military force. It would be travelling further into the subject than he at present proposed doing, were he to go at large into the generally understood principle on which it was undertaken; but at some period of the inquiry he should state to the House the nature of the service, the course taken in the execution of it, and the consideration whence his approbation proceeded, when he stated that that which had interfered with the ulterior objects of the Expedition had been removed by the fall of Flushing. The ulterior objects were undoubtedly Antwerp, and the shipping, arsenals, magazines, &c. in its vicinity. He should state his opinion of what had been done, and be ready to hold the officer from blame who had commanded the armament if it should appear he had done his duty. He wished to ask the noble lord if he intended first to call evidence as to the policy or the execution? He had no wish to express on the subject. He wished entirely to conform to that mode of inquiry which the House in its wisdom should consider the best. He wished for the fullest inquiry to be made into his conduct, that it might be seen how far his influence had been exerted in advising the Expedition.

Lord *Porchester* said, that as it might not be possible to separate the policy from the execution he proposed to go by time. Beginning with the subjects connected with the documents of the earliest date, he thought they might commence with the policy, proceed with the conduct, and close with the evacuation of Walcheren.

Sir *F. Burdett* thought the orders of the

commander in chief to the officers under him appeared wanting. The production of the military journal of the staff officers he thought might supply the deficiency.

Mr. *Croker* gave notice that he should on Monday move for certain papers relating to the Expedition; which had been omitted in the returns laid on the table. These papers would serve to make the whole complete, in order to a proper understanding of the question so far as related to the share which the admiralty board had in the Expedition.

Mr. *C. Wynn* wished to know if the commander in chief of the Expedition had been instructed to proceed immediately to Antwerp, or if it was part of his orders to besiege Flushing first?

Lord *Castlereagh* knew of no instructions but those given under the sign manual.

Mr. *Tierney* thought any papers that it might be necessary for them to have produced could be moved for in the Committee.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was of opinion they might be referred to a Secret Committee, who could decide what papers ought to be produced. He then gave notice that on Monday he would move for the appointment of such a Committee.

Mr. *Tierney* said, he thought those who had the sense of the House in their favour had a right to determine in what manner the inquiry should be carried on. He was for appointing a Committee that night that no time might be lost.

Mr. *Canning* was anxious to give the Inquiry the greatest possible effect. He had formerly suggested the propriety of referring the military evidences to other tribunals, and he gave it as his opinion that it would have been better so to have done. He would state, in a very few words, what he thought it would be most becoming the House to inquire into. There were three points to which he thought their attention should be directed. The first was the policy of the Expedition. This was the most extended question, since it comprehended the situation in which Great Britain was placed with the other powers of Europe. For this he felt himself in the highest degree responsible. The military and naval proceedings, though he viewed them with the most favourable eye, he could not think himself responsible for. He did not consider himself at all answerable for the evacuation of Walcheren; at the same time,

while saying this, he most distinctly desired to be understood as not giving an opinion either the one way or the other. It might be that the House would be of opinion, that blame attached itself no where; but if it should appear that blame did attach somewhere, if he were too active in eliciting discoveries to the prejudice of others, it might appear that he wished to throw the blame off himself by placing the misconduct of others in a most luminous point of view. He would therefore punctually give his attendance throughout the inquiry, and give every explanation of his own conduct; but it was his intention to avoid as much as possible taking an active part, where he was not personally concerned.

The House, on the motion of lord Porchester, then resolved itself into the Committee.

Mr. *Yorke* now moved the standing order for exclusion of strangers, which was of course enforced, and the Gallery cleared.\*

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday, February 5.*

[THANKS OF THE HOUSE TO GENERAL STEWART.] Brigadier general the hon. Charles Stewart being come to the House, the Speaker acquainted him that the House had upon Thursday last resolved, That the Thanks of this House be given to him for his distinguished exertions on the 27th and 28th of July last, in the memorable battle of Talavera, which terminated in the signal defeat of the forces of the enemy; and the Speaker gave him the Thanks of the House accordingly, as followeth, viz.

“Brigadier-general Charles Stewart; Amongst the gallant officers to whom this House has declared its gratitude for their distinguished services in Spain, your name has the honour to stand enrolled.—During the progress of the two last campaigns in Spain and Portugal, whoever has turned his eyes towards the bold and perilous operations of our armies in Leon and Galicia; whoever has contemplated the brilliant passage of the British troops across the Douro, an exploit which struck the enemy himself with admiration as well as dismay; must have marked throughout those memorable achievements, that spirit

of energy and enterprize with which you have rapidly advanced in the career of military fame, and by which you have now fixed your name for ever in the annals of your country, as a chief sharer in those immortal laurels won by British fortitude and valour in the glorious and hard-fought battles of Talavera.—Upon the great commander under whom it was there your pride and felicity to serve, his sovereign, this House, and the voice of an applauding empire, have conferred those signal testimonies of honour and gratitude, which posterity will seal with its undoubting approbation: and it is no mean part of the merits for which you are to be this day crowned with our Thanks that you were chosen by such a commander, to be the companion of his councils, and the sure hand to which he could entrust the prompt and effectual direction of his comprehensive and victorious operations.—To you, Sir, I am therefore now to deliver the Thanks of this House; and I do accordingly, in the name and by the command, of the Commons of the United Kingdom, thank you for your distinguished exertions on the 27th and 28th days of July last, in the memorable battles of Talavera, which terminated in the signal defeat of the forces of the enemy.”

Upon which brigadier gen. *Stewart* said,

“Mr. Speaker; I feel myself totally inadequate to express the high sense I entertain of the distinguished honour that has been conferred upon me, an honour far exceeding any little services I may have rendered in the fortunate situations in which I have been placed: If a sentiment of regret could at such a moment arise in my mind, it would be, that (from the circumstance of a severe indisposition) I stand alone here on the present occasion, the army being still on service, and that I am not accompanied by my gallant brother officers (equally members of this House), who are far more eminently entitled to its thanks and to the applause of their country than myself.—If I might venture to arrogate any thing beyond the most anxious zeal for the King’s service, and a sincere love for the profession I belong to, it is an ardent desire to follow the footsteps of my great and gallant commander, to whose sole abilities and exertions we stand indebted not only for the battle of Talavera, but for all those successes which have rendered him alike an ornament to his country and a terror to her foes: To follow his bright example,

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\* For the Minutes of each day’s Evidence, see Appendix to this volume.



to emulate his achievements, and to be thought worthy of his confidence, I shall ever consider as the surest passport to the greatest distinction that can be conferred on a soldier; I mean the approbation of this honourable House.—I must now offer my sincerest acknowledgments to you, Sir, for the very marked kindness you have shewn me in expressing to me the Thanks of this House, by condescending to enumerate my humble services in the partial manner you have done; and I beg to assure you it will be my anxious study to avail myself of all occasions to merit the honour which has this day been conferred upon me."

[SINECURE OFFICES.] Mr. Fuller rose to bring forward his promised motion, for an instruction to the Finance Committee, to inquire and report respecting Sinecure Offices which they should think necessary to be abolished. He began by stating, that he found in the third report of the Committee on public expenditures two paragraphs, stating, that amongst other items which called loudly for economy and retrenchment, were a great number of nominal offices under the crown, to which a very large sum was annually paid in salaries, but which partook of the nature of pensions, because no duty was done in lieu of the pay annexed. Of such places it was stated, that there were no less in England than 196, for which an aggregate sum of 142,655*l.* was annually paid in salaries and 38 in Ireland. There was besides a large salary annexed to the office of chief collector of customs in the port of London, which was also a sinecure. The second of those paragraphs stated, that it was impossible for the Committee to ascertain minutely the whole particulars of such cases, with out going into the examination of a long and complicated series of evidence; but the Committee had thrown the whole together, recommending their abolition. Next followed a long list, covering several pages, containing the names of places which he supposed to be those at which the paragraphs hinted; but he could wish the Committee had spoken out plainly and directly, what the places were at which they meant to point. A new Committee was appointed by the House a few nights since; and the motion he intended now to propose was, that it be an instruction to them to inquire forthwith respecting all such sinecure places, and report candidly to the House those which they should

think ought to be abolished. He sincerely hoped they would do so, and thus lay the ground of some specific measure for terminating such a misuse of the public money. He had no wish himself to be forward in introducing bills: he had no vain desire for seeking popularity in such cases. If the hon. gent. (Mr. Bankes), would undertake to bring forward a bill for that purpose, he would cheerfully resign to him all the credit of the measure, and wash his own hands from all concern in it. He concluded by moving his proposed instruction to the Committee.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* hoped the House would not adopt the motion. The House had heretofore appointed a Committee of inquiry, who had done their duty by proceeding on the investigation referred to them, and reporting the result to the House, leaving it for the House itself to adopt any measures thereon that might appear eligible to its wisdom; but without giving any opinion of their own, as to what places ought or ought not to be abolished. He trusted that the House would not now send back the subject to the present Committee, or delegate any power of giving any opinion on it; but that the House would act by its own discretion. The hon. member (Mr. Bankes) had signified his purpose of proposing some resolutions on the subject. He himself had others to propose; but he was decidedly against delegating any such duty to a Committee as that now proposed. The former Committee had done its duty. Its report was before the House, and it was for the House to adopt any procedure thereupon it should deem most fitting.

Mr. Bankes expressed his hope, that if the House had confidence in the Committee it would not fetter them by any such instruction as that proposed; because such an inquiry must occupy their whole time during the session, and postpone every other object of their pursuit. Each office would make of itself a separate case for inquiry, and the Committee could not be called on to recommend the abolition of any particular case, without accompanying such recommendation with the documents upon which it was founded. In fact, it was quite impossible for the committee to proceed with any effect in such a purpose, without coming, in the first instance, to some declaratory principle as a foundation for their subsequent proceedings; such, for instance, as

a resolution, that all sinecure places ought to be abolished. After this, all that would remain for the Committee would be, to ascertain what offices could be ranged under that class. Without this, discussions on the subject would be endless; for every member would be of a different opinion as to what places ought or ought not to be abolished. This was the principle laid down by Mr. Burke in his system of reform; and the want of such a principle gave rise to all the difference and delay in the proceedings of the Committee last session.

Mr. *Leycester* said, it was an opinion very generally maintained by the former Committee, that if sinecure places were to be abolished, some other means must be devised for remunerating public services; as in numerous cases which would occur, the mere salary annexed to a place would be inadequate, and therefore it was suggested, that although some might be abolished, others ought to be retained.

Mr. *Fuller* replied, that since he could not carry this instruction to the Committee, who had an hundred times better means than he had to ascertain the truth, he should bring forward a bill, in which he would name all the sinecure places enumerated in the report to which he had alluded, leaving it for the House to retain or abolish those they thought fit. He would not allow so important an object to be defeated by a side wind; and, shame upon England, if the bill should be rejected.

The motion was then negatived without a division.

[DISPUTE WITH AMERICA.] Mr. *Whitbread* rose pursuant to notice, and after a few preliminary observations, moved, "That there be laid before the House copies of dispatches from Mr. Erskine to Mr. Secretary Canning dated the 3d and 4th of December, 1808; and also copies of dispatches from Mr. Erskine to Mr. Smith, dated in August 1808."

Mr. *Canning* declared, that as no inconvenience was now likely to arise to his Majesty's government from the production of those papers, he had not the slightest objection to their being laid upon the table. He was not in the House on a former night when mention was made of a dispatch, relative to which some difference of opinion had originated. A question had arisen between Great Britain and America with respect to the propriety of ratifying the agreement into

which Mr. Erskine had entered with the United States. It was the opinion of the British cabinet, that such agreement ought to be abolished, and of the American, that it ought to be kept. Of the former opinion he decidedly was; and although he did not wish to impute blame to Mr. Erskine, still he was of opinion, that good faith was to be kept up between the nations only by a disavowal *in toto* of Mr. Erskine's power to come to any such conclusions as he did. It was totally a different question whether Mr. Erskine's original instructions were wise, and whether he was warranted in infringing them. On a former occasion, when he thought the production of these papers might do mischief, he was averse to their publication; but now since there could be no longer any danger, he was anxious for that publication. He hoped the House would examine them with care; and in the course of the examination, if he saw any necessity for other documents, he should himself move for them. As to the compact with America, all he should say was, that Mr. Erskine, in entering into that compact, had totally disobeyed his instructions, and of course his Majesty was by no means bound to observe it.

Mr. *Whitbread* hoped, as the right hon. gent. had declared Mr. Erskine guilty of disobeying his instructions, he, on the production of these papers, would be competent to verify his assertion. For his part, he held a very different opinion, and pledged himself to shew, that the substance of the instructions were strictly observed; and then the question would be reversed, and the right hon. gent. would have to shew why he ran counter to the instructions which he had himself dictated. He did not mean to speak from authority on the subject; but he had heard, that if the dispatch marked No. 1, had been produced, it would have set matters in a totally different point of view. He was happy, however, that the affair was about to be candidly examined, and had little doubt it would appear, that Mr. Erskine had wisely observed his instructions.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* thought, it his duty to declare, that the instructions were observed neither in substance nor in spirit.

The motion was then put and carried.

[SECRET COMMITTEE ON THE EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.] Lord *Porchester* moved for the appointment of a Secret.

Committee, "to whom should be referred the inspection and selection of certain secret information and confidential communication laid before his Majesty's ministers, with respect to the Expedition to the Scheldt, and of a nature improper to be made public." It was his intention that this Committee should be composed of nine members; the number might be increased or diminished as might be judged expedient. He then named Mr. secretary Ryder, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Whitbread, sir A. Pigott, admiral Markham, Mr. F. Robinson, Mr. Bathurst, general Ferguson, lord Porchester.

Lord G. L. Gower, as a noble friend of his (lord Castlereagh) was so intimately connected with the subject under inquiry, proposed that he should have leave to attend the Committee.

Lord Porchester could by no means see the necessity of this; he had indeed himself obviated any such necessity, by nominating the noble lord's own secretary, Mr. F. Robinson.

The *Speaker* said, the Committee might certainly take what steps they thought proper; but he considered the proposition in its present shape as perfectly novel.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* could not see what occasion those who were deeply interested in the event of the inquiry had to interfere with any future proceedings of the Committee. All they had to do was to see, in the commencement, that this Committee was so constituted as to do perfect justice between man and man. Of all propositions, then, which he had ever heard started, that of admitting the noble lord to attend the Committee was, in his opinion, least deserving of consideration. With respect to the number of which the Committee was proposed to be constituted, he could find no objection; but he had, indeed, much objection to make to the members who had been put in nomination to compose it. In this list he observed five out of the nine were gentlemen who had been in the constant habit of voting against the measures of government on every occasion. One gentleman who had been nominated was unable to attend on any Committee. To the three next, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Bathurst, and Mr. Wilberforce, he could have no objection: they were neither in the habit of directly voting with or opposing government; but he would ask, for that very reason, were they proper to be confronted with the other five, who were in steady

opposition? Was that a fair mode of proceeding? Were the members of the Committee properly matched? Was it right that he, for instance, one of the persons accused, should not have a representative in the Committee; or rather a Committee so mixed and mingled in itself, with such balanced weight and opinions as to form a representative body of the House? To the name of lord Porchester he had no objection; nor to that of Mr. Bathurst. Mr. Robinson, he thought as the friend of the noble lord, ought also to remain on it; and, as he thought, his right hon. friend (Mr. Canning) should have an equal advantage, he should propose the addition of the name of Mr. S. Bourne. He should also propose the name of Mr. Yorke. If general Ferguson, as a general officer, was requisite, he should add also, to make all fair, general Craufurd. As to admiral Markham, he was content to retain him, provided he was allowed to nominate captain Beresford. If a lawyer also was deemed necessary, he had no objection of course to sir A. Pigott; but in case he was retained, he should pair him off with Mr. Leycester, another of the same profession. This, in his opinion, would be much the most fair way of nominating the Committee, by which both the accused and the prosecutor would have equal justice.

Mr. Tierney allowed, of course, that to any member of the Committee who was deemed objectionable, an objection might be taken; but he believed it was perfectly novel to see one of the accused, over whom an impeachment hung, venturing to step forward and make choice of those whom he thought fit to select to inquire into his conduct. It was a much more extraordinary proceeding than any of those at which the right hon. gent. affected to be so much astonished. He had never known an occasion before, on which the nominator of the Committee had not the unlimited appointment of his own Committee, and on which he might not, if he chose, nominate his own friends. (A laugh.) Gentlemen might laugh; but he would ask those opposite, when was there ever a Committee appointed by government, on which ministers did not select their own adherents? at least, on which they did not take good care to secure the majority? On the present Committee, all were not chosen of the same way of thinking. In that case, indeed, there might be some show of objection; but here there was barely sufficient to turn the

scale. It was remarkable that there was one gentleman (Mr. Whitbread) on the Committee, whom the right hon. secretary had passed over even in silence. Why was he so passed over? Was it because he had shewn himself so well qualified to conduct an impeachment, and to discover delinquency? Was it because the thanks of that House had been given him on a late trying occasion? He had no objection in the world that justice should be done to all sides, and he thought the noble lord had full justice done him in the nomination of his friend and secretary, Mr. Robinson. The right hon. gent. had objected to one gentleman as unable to attend (sir R. Bickerton); but he seemed to forget that he was withdrawn, and Mr. secretary Ryder, to whom ministers could certainly have no objection, substituted in his place. In one choice, indeed, the right hon. gent. had seemed judicious; and if he saw any necessity for a change in the members, he of course could have no objection to him; he meant Mr. Yorke. No man could deny that Mr. Yorke was in every respect qualified to constitute a member of a secret Committee. (A laugh.) Indeed he should, of such a Committee, be elected chairman. He was not disposed to object to Mr. S. Bourne, if the number could admit him; but why should Mr. Leycester be put in nomination? He supposed the right hon. gent. considered himself bound to have him on some Committee soon, in consideration of his having been ousted from the last for which he had proposed him. If the list, as amended, was adopted, he feared the public would be very little satisfied with it. The public would naturally enough, be very suspicious of every proceeding of a Committee, from whose discussions they were excluded. If, then, substantial and evident justice was aimed at, the original Committee would be elected; but if otherwise, the choice of the right hon. gent. coming in the way it did, from the accused, would be adopted.

Mr. *Stephen* was not a little surprised to hear that the nomination of the jury was to be at the disposal of the prosecutor. It was, indeed, not only a singular, but a preposterous assertion. If, as had been said, an impeachment was hanging over ministers from the result of this inquiry, why should it be conducted by men who had declared, that their object in the inquiry itself was to turn ministers out of power? To "get rid of them," was

the noble lord's expression. Why should men who had made this their avowed object, be allowed to nominate the Committee? It was said, indeed, that ministers had no right to nominate the Committee, but they had a right to object; if so, the only way in which they could object was, as they had done, collectively; for if they objected singly to each individual member, and divided on it, then one half of the House might be gone through, and much time uselessly lost. Would any one say that there were many men on the Committee who were not biased—who were not in opposition—who were not party men? And surely nothing was so apt to bias men as party prejudice; it totally discoloured every thing which was seen through its medium. Like the magic leaf from the wizard Michael, in the Lay of the Last Minstrel, it effected a total metamorphosis, changing every thing which it touched, and making reality appear delusion. There were some men proposed for the jury whom he considered perfectly just, if they could be divested of their party prejudices. Sir A. Pigott, for instance, was as honourable a man as lived, party aside. He could not consider him as adequate to remain on the jury; not because he was not pure, but because he had an interest in the decision—he was to come into power, in case the present ministers were turned out—he was not to consider the justice of the prosecution, but to receive the penalty of the conviction! He was, of course, not an adequate, because not an unbiassed juror. When asked, if he thought his near friend and connection (Mr. Wilberforce) was a proper juror, he had only to say, that perhaps the relative delicacy of his situation with respect to him might invalidate his judgment; but if it was considered that only party men were to be on the Committee, and that those should be fairly opposed to each other, he could not think that his hon. friend, who was not connected with either party, ought to be a member. He said this, loving his person as he did, and ardently admiring his public character. He gave his assent to the list as amended by the chancellor of the exchequer.

Mr. *Windham* was disposed fully to allow that the learned gent. who had just sat down, had, indeed, argued well and quoted aptly: there was only one trifling objection to both his arguments and his quotations, and that was, they were not to

the purpose. He had commenced by considering the Committee as a jury, and on that supposition he built all his argument. The supposition was wrong in *limine*, and then what became of all the fine reasoning he deduced from it? The fact was, the Committee was not a jury; they were only to select evidence to be laid before the jury; a mere Committee of inquiry on the part of the prosecution. Now that position was down, what was the next? To the full as fallacious: he objected to the Committee on the part of the prosecution as partial. Why, who ever heard of an impartial prosecution? It was not in the nature of a prosecution to be impartial. If a man prosecuted a murderer who killed his relation, was he impartial? If a man pursued with legal vengeance a robber who assails his purse, could he be said to be impartial? Was he not necessarily and naturally biassed against the robber, or the murderer? In a prosecutor, impartiality would be a failing; for impartiality was very near a-kint to indifference; and what stimulative could indifference be to inquiry? or what promoter of justice did there ever appear, whose prominent feature was apathy to offence? The next assault was made upon party. He could not allow the justice of the accusation. No; he had been a party man all his life; and of course following that which he conceived right, he was ready to defend it: but how was it proved, that those who styled themselves "No party men," were more adequate and less impartial? They voted neither for one side or other; but now on this, and then on that; and thus with the steadiness of no side, they were yet partial to both sides! It had been said also, the prosecutor had no right to name the jury; and why not? Who ever named the jury but the prosecutor, giving of course to the accused the privilege of challenge, though not of nomination? But here the accused were doubly indulged; they not only had their own selection of documents to present on trial, but even some of their own friends were liberally named on the committee. So far from ministers having any just ground of complaint, they had rather an incentive to gratitude.

Mr. *Burton* supported the committee as amended.

Mr. *Hobhouse* thought the question before the House a very narrow one; it was simply, in the first instance, whether there should be any committee appointed

at all. The question of names was a subsequent one. In the appointment even of the committee itself, he was of opinion it would have been wisest to have waited until it was certain whether any necessity for its institution would arise. He thought the term of jury had been improperly applied to the committee, as they were more properly intended to select materials for information than to adjudicate or decide. He thought it equally wrong to call them a committee for the prosecution, since strict impartiality should be their distinguishing feature. He did not know what was meant by gentlemen on one side and the other calling in question the impartiality of the members. He felt himself low in his own estimation as a member of parliament at such language, and was sure that an indiscriminate committee was selected from both sides of the House, every member of it would do his duty. "What, Sir, are we not all impartial?"—(A laugh.) Notwithstanding the laugh, he was sure they all were; and for his part, when the question of names was put, he would vote for each member, not viewing his impartiality, but his talents.

Lord *Porchester* then nominated for the committee, himself,—agreed to. Mr. *Bathurst*, Mr. *F. Robinson*, admiral *Markham*, general *Ferguson*. Agreed to. Mr. *Wilberforce*. On the proposal of this last name, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that of Mr. *Sturges Bourne* as an amendment.

Lord *Porchester* declared it his intention, in case Mr. *Wilberforce* was suffered to remain on the committee, to nominate Mr. *S. Bourne* next; but Mr. *Perceval* persisting in his intention to divide the House, strangers were ordered to withdraw. The only division that took place was, on the names of sir *John Sebright* and Mr. *Yorke*. For Mr. *Yorke*, 196, sir *J. Sebright*, 128. All the rest were agreed to without any division.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday, February 6.*

[PETITION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS OF TIPPERARY.] General *Mathew* presented a Petition from the Roman Catholics of the county of Tipperary, setting forth, "That the petitioners did, in the month of May 1808, humbly petition the House, praying the total abolition of those penal laws which aggrieve the Roman Catholics of these realms; and that they

now feel themselves obliged, in justice to themselves, their families and their country, once more to solicit the attention of the House to the subject of their said Petition; and they state that the Roman Catholics constitute the most numerous and increasing portion of the inhabitants of Ireland, comprising an immense majority of the trading, agricultural, and manufacturing interests, and amounting to at least four-fifths of the Irish population; that they contribute largely to the exigencies of their country, civil and military; that they pay the greater part of the public and local taxes, and even defray the charges of building and repairing Protestant houses of worship, and of maintaining in affluence the ministers of the Protestant religion; that they supply the armies and navies of the Empire with upwards of one third part in number of the soldiers and sailors employed in the public service; and that notwithstanding heavy discouragements, they form the principal constituent part of the strength, wealth, and industry of Ireland; yet such is the grievous operation of those penal laws, of which they complain, that the Roman Catholics are thereby not only set apart from their fellow subjects as aliens in this their native land, but are ignominiously and rigorously proscribed from almost all situations of public trust, honour or emolument, including every public function and department from the houses of legislature down to the most petty corporations; and they state that wherever public duty, arduous and unprofitable, is to be exacted and enforced, the Catholic is sought out and selected for its performance; where honours or rewards are to be dispensed, he is neglected or contemned; where public burthens and taxes, of what kind soever, are to be imposed and levied, the Catholic is distinguished by the weight of impost; but where emolument or subsistence is to flow from those taxes, all clause of beneficial participation is closed against his hopes; when the military and naval strength of the empire is to be recruited, the Catholics are eagerly invited, nay compelled to bear at least their full share in the perils of warfare, and in the lowest ranks; but when preferment and promotion, the dear and legitimate prize of successful valour, are to be distributed as rewards of merit, no laurels are destined to grace a Catholic brow, or to fit the wearer for command;—the petitioners state thus generally the condition of the

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Roman Catholics, occasioned solely by the fatal influence and operation of those penal laws; and, though they forbear to detail particular instances, yet they do not the less trust to the influence of reason and justice, which eventually must prevail for effecting in their favour a full and deliberate enquiry into their grievances and finally accomplishing their effectual relief; and that the petitioners do beg leave, however, most solemnly to press upon the attention of the House the imminent public dangers which necessarily result from so inverted an order of things, and so vicious and unnatural a system of legislation, a system which has long been the reproach of these nations, and is unparalleled throughout modern Christendom; and they state it as their fixed opinion, that to impart to the Roman Catholics of these realms a full, equal, and unqualified participation in the benefits of the laws and constitution of England, and to withdraw all the privations, restrictions, and vexatious distinctions which oppress, injure, and afflict them in their country, is now become a measure not merely expedient but absolutely necessary, not only a debt of right due to a complaining people, but perhaps the last remaining resource of this empire; and therefore praying the House to take into their most serious consideration the nature, extent, and operation of the aforesaid penal laws, and by repealing the same altogether, to restore to the Roman Catholics of these realms those liberties so long withheld, and their due share in that constitution which they in common with their fellow subjects of every other description, contribute, by taxes, arms, and industry, to sustain and defend.”—Ordered to lie upon the table.

[NAVAL COURTS MARTIAL.] Lord Cockburn rose to move for the production of copies of the Oaths administered to the members, witnesses, and judge advocate, upon naval courts martial. His lordship disclaimed any party motives with this motion, or any motives originating with a recent transaction of this nature, but was solely actuated by a wish to set right the misunderstanding upon this subject. He had been a member of numerous courts martial, where he had an opportunity of observing the evil consequences arising from the misconstruction of the oath, and the want of those regulations on the part of the judge advocate, which were practised in military courts martial so benefi-

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cially to the public service. He meant afterwards to move for a committee, to consider the construction of those oaths, and in what manner they might be amended.

Sir F. Burdett seconded the motion.

Mr. Croker had but one objection to the motion, viz. that these documents were already before the House. The oaths of the members and judge advocate would be found in the stat. 22 Geo. 2, then on the table, and the oath of the witnesses in a book, called, *The Naval Code*; and thus, where such documents were so accessible, he could see no parliamentary grounds for the motion.

Lord Cochrane agreed to withdraw that part of his motion relating to the oaths in the statute book, upon an understanding that he should be at liberty to read them upon any motion he might hereafter think necessary.—The other part of the motion was then put and carried.

[STANDING ORDER FOR THE EXCLUSION OF STRANGERS.] Mr. Sheridan rose to submit the proposition to the House, of which he had on the last evening given notice; and although he felt it to be a subject of the greatest importance, he still could not coincide in the apprehensions of those who considered this interference with what was called the Standing Order of that House, as a matter attended with mighty difficulties and with peculiar delicacy. In delivering his sentiments upon this subject, it was wholly unnecessary for him to take up any considerable portion of their time. Neither did the plain statement to which he should confine himself stand in need of adventitious ornaments. There was little use for calling forth either the eogency of argument, or the decorations of language, to recommend the course which he should propose; for if the good sense of the House, its willingness to stand high in the estimation of the country, and to hold firm the confidence of its constituents—if all such powerful and persuasive inducements could not influence them, then it would be idle to expect that such auxiliary aids could make an impression. There was nothing in what he should propose which savoured of party motive or of political bias; his sole object was to impress upon that House the vital necessity of meriting by its conduct, at this critical period more than ever, the confidence of the people. That being his view of the question, he could not lend himself to the apprehensions of those who, from most

honourable motives he was convinced, had felt it to be their duty to call into action that mistakenly supposed Standing Order for the Exclusion of Strangers. Unwilling as he was to create any irritation in the discussion of this subject, he still must ask, what was there in the present investigation, in which the House was engaged, that called for concealment and secrecy, disclaimed and refused in a recent inquiry, which from its nature might have pleaded for that delicacy—in that inquiry where the House was compelled to tear aside the veil which the imperfections of humanity had thrown over the frailties of domestic life? Shall then the House grant to an accused ministry that protection which concealment can afford, upon a great question of political importance, involving the honour, the interests, and the character of the country, after having refused it to the son of their sovereign, in a case where the very nature and character of the transactions inquired into would have naturally prompted to the temporary suspension of reporting daily its proceedings? He was ready to believe that ministers did not wish to screen their conduct by such an expedient; and even if they did, he was sure, from the independent political career of the right hon. gent. (Mr. Yorke) who had enforced the Order, that he would have disdained to be their instrument for any such purpose. It was not the wish, he was assured, of the two Secretaries of State to have any such course pursued. It had indeed been expressed as the wish of the noble lord (Castlereagh) that the investigation should be as open and public as possible, that the scrutiny into his share of those transactions which were to be the subject of inquiry, should be both strict and rigorous. What, then, could have induced the right hon. gent. to press this Order at this most perilous crisis? What could be the advantage in this House meeting the public hope, by an act which must lead to public disappointment? How can that examination which the country and the House, had proclaimed to be necessary for our honour and security, prove by its publicity through the ordinary channels, to be mischievous to the public interests? From what had fallen from the right hon. gent. (Mr. Yorke), it might be inferred that he was apprehensive lest a partial or garbled publication of the evidence might be made by the daily prints. But he must be allowed to observe, that, in the communication of

the transactions of that House, the editors of the Public Journals had been uniformly guided by the strictest impartiality. There never was exerted any undue influence, never felt any improper bias in giving parliamentary reports. But if there was one point upon which they were more scrupulous than another relative to the proceedings of that House, it was in correctly and fully communicating the details of evidence when examined at the bar. Were even the editors inclined from motives of their own, or corrupt views of self interest, to excite any improper prejudice by mutilated or unjustifiable statements, he was confident that not one of the gentlemen who were in the habit of taking the reports of that House, would lend himself to such an improper service. Suppose they should not choose to make correct reports of what passed in that House, would it be endured by the country? Would any one purchase their papers which did not give so material a feature of intelligence? Why then preclude them from this particular subject of investigation? But the right hon. gent. (Mr. Yorke) had stated that the newspapers could take copies of the Minutes printed by the order of the House. They certainly can, but it was wholly at their option; and will it be endured that the country should be deprived of that information which it is most alive to be possessed of, that it should be kept in complete ignorance of what parliament was doing at one of the most awful moments of its existence; for surely it would not be contended that the papers printed by the order of that House could by any possibility circulate throughout the mass of the population of these kingdom? But even were these documents to circulate, they would only convey the mere questions and answers. All the interlocutory discussion would be suppressed, and perhaps questions of the most vital importance for ever withheld from the knowledge of the people. He would put an instance—had it not occurred when with shut doors they were engaged in debate on a former night, that the whole inquisitorial power of the House of Commons was made questionable? When it was contended by the minister of England, that it had not the power to demand answers from a witness at its bar, because he was a privy counsellor. It was true, that the right hon. gent. who had then thrown down the gauntlet, had since re-

ceded from the contest; yet still he would ask, whether upon an interlocutory discussion of this kind, involving the character, nay the very constitution of that House in the exercise of the whole of its inquisitorial powers, it was not right that the British people should know who were the members in that House, who would support such a principle, and what were the arguments by which such extraordinary doctrine was upheld? He was assured, that were the House polled upon the propriety of enforcing the order of exclusion, the wish of the majority would be to proceed upon the present question, in a similar manner as it had done with the inquiry last session. If, then, such was the feeling of the House, he would put it to hon. gentlemen, whether it was not most preposterous, that it should be in the power of any individual, either in his wisdom or his caprice, to defeat its general wish, and that upon a question in which the House had not the remotest desire to disgust the public mind, by screening itself under the mask of concealment.—He was perfectly assured that the right hon. gent. who had enforced the standing order, did not act from any impression or suggestion that it would be agreeable to, or was desired by ministers, in order to shelter their conduct, from exposure by the publicity of the investigation. He verily believed he was one of the last men who would lend himself to such a purpose; and he was, therefore, greatly surprised at his persisting in a measure which could not fail of being highly repugnant to the feelings of the public, as well as highly injurious to the interests of the nation. It was known to be the universal wish throughout the country, that this inquiry should be carried on in the manner most likely to promote the ends of public justice, and would the nation give credit to that House for a sincere and honest desire to comply with its wishes, if they were to involve their proceedings in mystery and concealment? A House of Commons, that regarded its own character, and respected the opinion of its constituents and the public, should not resist the feelings of the public at a period like the present. He begged to ask what was the sanctity of this supposed Standing Order? In the first place, he must contend that it was no Standing Order at all.—Was it a part of the *Lex Parliamentaria*, one of those fundamental principles the elements of their existence, interwoven



with the constitution of the House itself. It was no such thing, but merely took its place among many other good and many other frivolous regulations, affecting the proceedings of that House. It was passed at the opening of the session, upon question which might have been rejected, when proposed, and, of course, liable to revision, and repeal, on any subsequent occasion. But of all other regulations, the present order had this peculiarity, that the very act of enforcing it defeated its object. It had been his lot to have proved this experiment upon a former occasion, when this system of exclusion was insisted upon by rather an obstinate member. Finding that hon. member still determined to persevere, he had assured him, that if the order were to be in future enforced, it should be fully enforced and strictly executed: that he should have "the bond and nothing but the bond." This intimation had its effect, and it was not till the present inquiry that any further attempt had been made to enforce the order. But it was a most mistaken idea to conceive that this order empowered any member to call upon strangers to withdraw. It allowed of no such interference, nor invested any member with such authority. Here the right hon. member read the Order, which says, That any stranger appearing in the House shall be taken into custody by the Serjeant. If the House therefore were determined to enforce the Order, they must do it in the very words, and must direct that all the strangers present be secured; as the Order directly calls upon the Serjeant at Arms to take into actual custody all strangers, without distinction of persons, who shall have intruded themselves into the House. By being present the offence is committed, and any member of the House had no more right to order the culprit who had intruded, to withdraw, than he would have to rescue him after his committal into custody.—The power and authority rested with the Serjeant at Arms alone; and how was he to enforce it? If in proceeding to obey the order the Serjeant should find two or three hundred persons collected in the gallery, it would obviously be impossible for him to take them all into custody, and therefore he must shut them up in the gallery, whilst he went to collect his *posse comitatus*. But whilst he is assembling his forces, the debate goes on; the strangers are in possession of all that has passed; and thus, by

its very operation, the object of this Standing Order is defeated. But if this Order claims such particular reverence, let it be considered there are many others, which any other member could move to have enforced. For instance, that no footman shall be allowed in the passages leading to this House; and indeed, any member addicted to early rising (a laugh) might, if he were capitious, enforce the order for the House meeting at 10 o'clock in the morning. There was also another order, which stated it to be the privilege of members to pass strangers through the House into the gallery, except whilst the House is sitting. Here, then, were two orders wholly irreconcilable, unless it was intended, that the members should introduce their friends, for the purpose of being committed to the custody of the Serjeant at Arms. Was it not, then, a duty to reconcile such orders to themselves, and both to common sense? He did not mean to convey an opinion, or to maintain it as a rule, that there never could arise an occasion when strangers ought to be excluded, but he did wish to have the order so modified that it should not depend upon the caprice or pleasure of any individual member, but should be fairly submitted to the decision of the House: that if any hon. gent. should think proper to enforce the order he should afterwards be called upon to state some reason for his conduct. It would be apparent from this observation, that it was not his intention to move for the repeal of the order: all he wanted was to bring it under the consideration of the House in a constitutional manner.—In the courts of justice, when any particular case excited the public curiosity, the people went in by a rush. God forbid that in the House of Commons the gallery should be filled in this tumultuous manner; but if that should happen to be the case, would the House think of taking into custody those who were introduced by members, and in conformity to an order, reputed a standing order. He thought that where strangers were introduced by members, they should be allowed to continue, except when the question was such that it was not proper to be discussed before strangers. Such a subject had not frequently occurred; and he could not conceive why in the present case it should be deemed necessary to exclude strangers. To permit strangers to hear the discussion on this subject, would be the most likely way to ingratiate the House

with the public. They had lately been used to it day after day. When the character of the king's son was to be investigated, and his conduct sifted in the minutest manner, not a syllable had been heard of the exclusion of strangers; but, when the conduct and character of ministers was to be inquired into, then it appeared to be a subject too tender and delicate for public inspection in that House. He thought there never was a period in our history, in which it was more necessary for parliament to conciliate the public; and, wishing that to be the case, he would move, "That a Committee of Privileges be appointed to meet to-morrow, in the Speaker's Chamber, to consider the order of the 25th of January last."

Mr. *Windham* said, he supposed it might create some surprise that he should, on the present occasion, speak and vote against the motion brought forward by his right hon. friend. This was, however, one of those accidental matters in which he had always differed in opinion with his right hon. friend. His right hon. friend had said, that he thought it a matter of importance; he for his own part confessed he did not think it was. This would frequently be the case. The importance of the war had not weighed sufficiently with his right hon. friend to bring him to the House in the various questions concerning it, that had been discussed since the commencement of the session, though this Standing Order had produced that effect. His right hon. friend had always been an advocate for the liberty of the press. He (Mr. *Windham*) was the same; but on other grounds, and what had been said by his right hon. friend on the present question, seemed to him to be rather the matter of a threat than an argument. To allude to the enforcement of all other standing orders was a threat, and not an argument. This Standing Order had obtained and been submitted to for a century, and no inconvenience had been found in it till within the last 30 years. His right hon. friend seemed to consider the right of admission of strangers into the gallery as a part of the constitution of that House, whereas, on the contrary, it had been granted as a mere matter of favour. He would first ask, how much the country had gained in the improvement of its affairs since that practice had obtained. He could not say in what respect the country had gained any thing; past times might be contrasted with the present; but still, from the daily manner

in which the debates were published, he wanted to know in what way he was to state the advantages accruing to the country. What was the value to their constituents of knowing what was passing in that House? Supposing they should never know, it was only the difference between a representative government and a democracy. Till within the last 20 or 30 years, it not only was not practised as now, but it was not even permitted to publish the debates of that House. So lately as the time of Dr. Johnson, the debates were never published but under fictitious names. He was one of those who liked the constitution as it was, he did not like it as it is. If this practice had been tolerated, winked at, and suffered, it was no reason that it should on all occasions be continued, and that persons should make a trade of what they obtained from the galleries, amongst which persons were to be found men of all descriptions; bankrupts, lottery-office keepers, footmen and decayed tradesmen. He had heard that the proprietors of papers had talked of the injustice of closed doors. This was taking up the subject as if the admission of strangers into the gallery was a privilege, but it was no such thing, and though he might perhaps think it useful to let it continue after having so long prevailed, he did not allow it to be a privilege. Were that the case, we should come into a state of democracy—a state like that of Athens. He did not think accounts in the daily papers were so desirable as many others did. They had lately exposed themselves and reviled government so far as to assert, that some of their contemporaries were in the pay of government. What did this prove—not the value or actual importance of papers—but it clearly shewed that if government could have them in their pay, then papers were liable to be let for hire—to be bought and sold—and that the press, which had been thought in this country the palladium of its liberty, was always to be purchased by the highest bidder. He did not wish to establish such a power in the press as to enable it to controul parliament. He did not know any of the conductors of the press; but he understood them to be a set of men who would give into the corrupt misrepresentation of opposite sides; and he was therefore determined not to lend his hand to abrogate an order which was made to correct an abuse. He now saw that it led to consequences of a most mischievous tendency—no less than to change

the character of a representative government which presumed confidence in the representative body, into that of a democracy in which every thing was done by the people: and led directly to that despotism which had so lately desolated other countries. He did not like to part with a Standing Order, which, though it might have run to rust, would not in former times have led to any mischief, and he could see no reason why it should now be laid prostrate at the feet of the very worshipful, but he would say not very ancient, corporation of London printers. Those gentry had their favourites. His right hon. friend was esteemed and hailed by them as a general patron of the London press. For his part he could not tell whether his right hon. friend was their patron or their client on this occasion. He thought the House ought to maintain those rules and orders which had so long prevailed. He would assert, that the rights of the House were now in danger of being lost from misuse. It was like shutting up the gates of a park, in order to prevent a custom from growing into a right to a path-way. It was like the O. P.'s, who had set themselves up as the people of the country, and by a system of opposition and violence had compelled the proprietors of the theatre to give them plays at their own price. In this way the proprietors of newspapers told them that the people must have a daily publication of the proceedings of that House at their breakfast; and, in the name of the public, say, we have that right, and have friends in the House that will support us in our claim. His right hon. friend had said the character of the House was at stake; according to which argument, all the Houses that had existed previous to the last 30 years had no character or reputation at all. His right hon. friend was now also most anxious for the characters of ministers; he could not blame him for that sensibility, but he (Mr. W.) was anxious for the fame of this House, and could not see why they should hesitate in supporting a Standing Order, which had the sanction of so many years in its favour. For these reasons he should certainly give his vote against the motion.

Lord *Folkestone* felt compelled to declare the reasons which influenced him to depart from the opinion that he formerly held, in common with his right hon. friend who had just spoken, as to the inexpediency of allowing the publication of the proceedings of the House of Commons.

In several of the sentiments expressed by his right hon. friend he readily concurred. He believed with him that the venality of the press was great. He was willing to acknowledge, too, that the last 30 years had produced a considerable change in the constitution and situation of the country; but while he deplored this change, it was impossible for him not to attribute it to events wholly unconnected with the existing practice of publishing in the daily papers reports of the proceedings in that House. He thought that there were other, and far different, causes to which that was more justly attributable. The great and oppressive accumulation of taxes—the long foreign wars—the establishment, to such a great degree, of standing armies—the no less remarkable increase of barracks throughout the country, were, he thought, among some of the principal causes that had led to a change so much to be lamented. With respect to the publication of their debates, he was not so certain. Formerly, he might have thought it productive of much inconvenience; but now that it had been suffered to go on so long, he thought it was desirable that the publicity of their proceedings should experience no material interruption: although had the publication of them in no instance been connived at, he was by no means prepared to deny that he might at the present moment have opposed the introduction of such a practice for the first time. Yet as the public had been allowed regularly to receive a report of the proceedings in parliament, he was desirous that no casual interruption of that permission should occur. He was solicitous that as a change had taken place in the circumstances of the country, and even in the character of parliament, that change should be accompanied by correspondent changes in other respects. To prove that a change had taken place in the character of that House, he need only refer to the discussion of the preceding evening, during which the influence of party and personal considerations was manifested to an indecent and unexampled extent. When it broadly was stated in the House of Commons, as a matter of reproach, that a representative of the people belonged to no party, of which he may be himself an instance, such a statement was indeed evidence of a change, to which he thought the original practice of the House, in other respects, ought to conform. His right hon. friend had said, that the idea of a

representative body carried along with it that of the confidence of the persons represented. He wished it might be so. He wished them not only to be united in theory, but to be inseparable in fact; and yet it was but too notorious, that there were many persons who concurred in thinking not only that that House had not the confidence of the country, but that it did not deserve to have that confidence. Most absurdly it was an ill-advised mode of obtaining the general confidence to shut the nation out from obtaining information on an inquiry of the greatest magnitude, respecting which the most lively sensibility had been excited, and towards the result of which every eye was steadily and anxiously directed.

Mr. *Windham* explained. He never intended to attribute all the changes that had taken place during the last thirty years to the publicity of the proceedings of Parliament, but had merely mentioned that publicity as one cause of these changes, and added, that he was not aware of any material good consequences that had resulted from that practice.

Mr. *Yorke* said, he must protest, as long as these Standing Orders continued in force, against the supposition, that there was any necessity for a member who should move to enforce the Order, to account for the reasons which induced him so to do. He had felt it to be his indispensable duty to move the Order on the present occasion, from a consideration of the many mis-statements, which went forth to the public last year on a very important inquiry before that House. Having stated this, he would remind the House what it was that they were about to do, in entering into any such inquiry as that in which they had been recently engaged. It was no less than performing their great function as the grand inquest of the nation. The grand jury of a county, which was the common inquest, never admitted strangers to be present during the time of their examining evidence. How, then, could it be thought an unwarrantable use of their undoubted privilege, to exercise it at a time when the House was employed in its inquisitorial functions?—With regard to misrepresentations, could gentlemen see nothing of inconvenience, of mischief in the effects of such misrepresentations, forwarded daily throughout the country? He thought this a consideration in itself of no ordinary importance. A right hon. gent. had asked, why they had

not proceeded in the same manner in the course of a memorable inquiry last year. He regretted most sincerely they had not, and for his part he took shame to himself, that he had not then enforced the Standing Order. He declared, before God and his country, that if he had had a notion of the real nature of the case, or of the manner in which it afterwards turned out, he would then, as he did in the present instance, have performed what he thought his public duty. The Standing Order in question was a most ancient Order—this principle was to be found, perhaps, in the original constitution of that House. He solemnly deprecated any injudicious interference with their ancient Orders: under God the maintenance of the commonwealth was owing to the support of the privileges of that House, the support of their privileges was essential to the support of their authority, and notwithstanding what had fallen from a noble lord, he thought the support of the authority of that House essential to the maintenance of the commonwealth.

Lord *Folkestone*, in explanation, said, that he had not lent himself at any one period to any vulgar cry, nor had he said that any such influence ought to have weight with an honest representative of the people in discharging his duty to his constituents. But he well remembered when the right hon. gent. was in office, that that right hon. gent. and his colleagues urged, as an objection to the opinions of certain gentlemen, the unpopularity of those opinions, when they were even threatened with the consequences of that unpopularity.

Mr. *Yorke* professed himself unable even to guess at what the noble lord alluded to. Had he any charge to prefer against that noble lord or any other person, he should do it openly, and go through it steadily, but as to threatening any hon. member, he hoped he knew too well what became the gentleman to do so.

Lord *Folkestone* rose, amidst a cry of "Order! spoke!" to state more particularly the circumstances. At the time of the Peace of Amiens, he and others who disapproved of that peace were told of the great unpopularity of objecting to that measure.

Mr. *Tierney* said, that whatever charges might be preferred against him, it at least could not be said of him that he was indifferent to the maintenance of the privileges of that House. He thought them in

every possible point of view of the last importance, and of essential value to the constitution of the country. But he would say that the motion of his right hon. friend had been mis-stated: it was not a motion to rescind the Standing Orders, or any one of them, it was only to refer the consideration of one of them to the Committee of Privileges. For his own part, he was not aware that the Order could be amended, but in that Committee, he supposed, that it was the intention of his right hon. friend, if his motion was acceded to, to propose some suggestion that might or might not be approved of by the Committee. The right hon. gent. had stated, that the House was now in a situation similar to that of a grand jury. There was, however, this striking difference: the proceedings of the grand jury were not published at all; but in this instance, although the House might not choose to allow the newspapers to publish their proceedings from day to day, yet they themselves were aware of the necessity of their being published, and intended to publish them in another manner: and he apprehended that, after 658 copies had been struck off of the proceedings of last night, it could not be supposed that such proceedings would be altogether unknown. He must deny that any precedent existed, at least none occurred to his mind, of strangers having been excluded pending so important an inquiry. When had such a step been taken on such an occasion? Not during the whole American war, when so many military inquiries took place. He was at a loss to conceive what inconvenience could have arisen had the whole of the evidence taken before the Committee of Inquiry yesterday evening been published that morning. Had any misrepresentation occurred, it would only have been necessary to notice it to the House; and if it had been deemed advisable, the further publication of the proceedings might have been prohibited without excluding the public from the gallery. When formerly the debates were published under Roman names, or the names of the different speakers transposed, it was because it was then thought to be a breach of the privileges of that House to publish any of its proceedings; and this was the true state of the question; not that persons published what was false or what was true of their proceedings, but that they published them at all. No man had a right to publish a word of what he (Mr.

T.) was then saying. As to misrepresentations in the daily reports of their proceedings, they were certainly productive of much inconvenience. He himself seldom, if ever, looked into reports, so that he could speak impartially; but when he did, he remembered to have felt considerable pain, that sentiments should be put into his mouth, and should go down to his constituents, one syllable of which he had never uttered. Indeed, the difficulty of being accurate was now greatly increased. He did not blame the reporters, it was impossible they could be accurate, when they attempted to give the speeches at such an inordinate and extravagant length as they now were in the habit of doing. He acquitted them of intentionally misrepresenting what they reported, because it was their interest to do it as accurately as they could. He believed, therefore, that for this reason they would not be guilty of wilful misrepresentation, because those newspapers which gave the most accurate reports will have the most purchasers—as to himself, in the little intercourse he had had with the persons having the conduct of newspapers, he had asked but one favour of them, and that was, that they would do him the kindness to let him alone altogether; but with regard to the public, he thought they had—not a right, for that would be a wrong term to make use of—but something very like a right to know the nature of their proceedings in that House, on great public questions. He believed that it was true, that the state of things had been getting worse and worse for the last 30 years, and all that the public had gained was, the satisfaction of seeing from day to day what were the causes of this constant falling off. When it was considered that now a tenth part was demanded of every man's income, it must be allowed that this was a thing not thought of 30 years ago; and it would be too much to say, the public should not be permitted to know why it is, that this constant increase of taxation is pressing upon them? When large standing armies were maintained in the country, was it too much that the public should know on what grounds they were maintained? Yet from this little luxury the general enforcement of the Standing Order for the exclusion of strangers must inevitably shut them out. If in a Committee of Privileges therefore any modification of the Order could be hit upon in order to prevent its capricious enforcement, would not such an emenda-

tion be highly advantageous? And this without the least abandonment of the power which every member possessed of clearing strangers from the gallery at any moment whatever, without any reason assigned. The present inquiry was most important to the public. Never had there been more complicated disasters than those which during the last year had befallen three of the finest armies which Great Britain had ever produced. Was it not fitting that the public should know in what way the House of Commons were carrying on the inquiry into these events? If, in the noble lord's allusion to blame that he had incurred for not belonging to a party he had pointed to any former expression of his, the noble lord had entirely misconceived him. For himself, he was a party man; he thought no good could be done without party; he was satisfied, that for a member of the House of Commons to come down and to act upon his own principles without reference to concert with others, however theoretically right, was practically erroneous. He did not however asperse those who thought differently; although he could not help remarking, that the noble lord did not seem to act entirely upon the principle which he professed, but to belong to what might perhaps be termed a third party in the House.

Mr. *Luttreton* supported the motion, and conceived that the Committee of Privileges might easily find out a way of having correct reports published by authority, of whatever passed in that House, without excluding strangers.

Mr. *Peter Moore* trusted the House would indulge him in saying a few words, in defence of what he conceived to be a very meritorious class of individuals, the editors of newspapers. He was not acquainted with any of them; but he believed they had done more to enlighten and strengthen the public mind than any other class in the community. A right hon. gent. (Mr. Windham) had expressed himself a friend to the liberty of the press, but not to its present practice. If the press was, however, to be still further fettered in its practice, its liberties would be completely annihilated. He remembered to have read in the history of former times, that ministers had given the following advice to their sovereign, "We must destroy the press, or the press will destroy us." But that expression was used in times very different from the present. In

these licensed times every editor of a newspaper was registered, and was forthcoming, whenever the Attorney general might choose to call upon him to answer for any offence against the law. For his part, he could not discern any thing in the conduct of any of the papers which justified the degrading language in which the right hon. gent. on the floor had spoken of them. They were to the public the canals of information; and they paid annually above two millions in duties, being thus much more productive to the state than the canals of commerce. With respect to the exclusion of strangers, was there any thing going forward in the House, of which they were ashamed? Certainly not. Then why exclude the public from hearing their discussions.

Sir *F. Burdett* began by noticing the forbearance of many gentlemen to take a part in the debate, from whom he might have expected to hear the ablest defence of the liberty of the press. He must subscribe to many of the doctrines which he had heard from the right hon. gent. because they were constitutional, and which he only found fault with as inapplicable to the present situation of the country. If he could see in that House a body of gentlemen fairly and freely selected by the people as the chosen guardians of their rights—if he could see no placemen or pensioners within these walls, and if no corrupt or undue influence could ever be supposed to operate on the minds of any of the members of that assembly, then, indeed, he should see no particular objection to the inquiry being conducted in secret, and the evidence being given to the public in the manner that was now proposed. Unfortunately, however, the case was different and the House stood in the eye of the public, in a very opposite situation. They stood before the country under circumstances of great suspicion. It had been considered by some, that in point of character they were on their last legs. As for his part, he greatly feared that in reputation that House had not a leg to stand upon.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose to order. He stated, that in his opinion it was highly disorderly to assert, that the reputation of the House of Commons had not a leg to stand upon.

The *Speaker* said, that it was highly disorderly for any member to say that the House of Commons had lost its reputation.

Sir *F. Burdett* continued. He had not made the assertion positively, but stated it as his apprehension. But with all due submission, he had not expected such nicety, when he recollected the 11th of May last, and the acquittal of a minister detected in an attempt to introduce, by corrupt means, persons to seats in that House. He had not expected such extreme delicacy from an assembly that had last sessions passed an act by which they stood acknowledged as contaminated, and that by an act of parliament. He felt it his duty, whilst he continued a member of parliament, to speak the truth, and the whole truth, in that House; but, at the same time, he knew he must speak it in a manner agreeably to the order of the House, and conformably to those principles of common decency which gentlemen must observe in every assembly. He could not, however, imagine, that any attention to order would oblige him to suppose such an extreme degree of affectation of purity, as that we must not allow our ears to hear that, which we were not ashamed to do. The motion before them branched into a three-fold point of view—with respect to their former situation, the present practical effect of the enforcement of these orders, and also the particular case. As to the first, what became them formerly to do was not the question now, for they were no longer what they had been then. In the other two points of view, he had no objection to the motion. A right hon. gent. (Mr. *Yorke*) had stated that he was not bound to give any reasons for his motion. As this was his opinion, it appeared to him, that he would have done better in not attempting to give any. He had not specified any particular inconvenience which resulted from strangers being present at the last inquiry. Misrepresentations it was true, had been vaguely complained of, but none had been specified. Inconveniences resulting from the publicity of their proceedings on their inquiry into the duke of *York's* conduct had been also complained of—but he asked, did no advantages result from that publicity? He thought many had. He had at that time read the minutes, and had seen the daily reports, and he never detected an inaccuracy; indeed, he thought the reports in general given with remarkable accuracy, and with considerable ability.

Mr. *Sheridan* felt that he should be deficient in respect to his right hon. friend

near him (Mr. *Windham*), as well as to the House and to the public, were he to refrain from making a short reply to the arguments which had been advanced against his motion. It was remarkable, that in the discussion which had taken place, no gentleman on the other side of the House, except the hon. mover of the order, had participated; although he had pointedly suggested to those gentlemen that it was for their honour, and had boldly declared his belief that it was their wish, that the inquiry should be as public as possible. He was anxious to know whether or not they intended by their silence to shelter themselves under the extraordinary doctrines that had been professed by his right hon. friend, and to intimate that they agreed with him in the singular positions which he had maintained. His right hon. friend had begun his speech by criticising his absence from the House on former occasions during the present session. On this subject he must take leave to judge for himself when his presence in the House was necessary, and when not.—His right hon. friend had arraigned him for not being present to support the charges which as he stated had been proved against his Majesty's ministers. On the first day of the session he had attended, and had voted for the amendment. Since that period he had been much occupied with private business, but he had a right when he felt that a question was agitating of infinitely greater importance than any question of a mere political nature could possibly be, to put aside his private business and to attend for the purpose of assisting in the determination of that question. Such was the present question. On the first day of the session he had heard one side of the House arraigning the other as utterly incapable of fulfilling the duties of office. That might or might not be true. But the other side retorted that they were at least as competent as their adversaries, and that they possessed at least an equal share of the public confidence. Now, for what he knew, the country at large, with a very civil kind of impartiality, might believe both parties.—The inference which he would draw from this circumstance was, that the House should guard against adding to the unfavourable impression which such mutual accusations were calculated to produce. His right hon. friend had called him a counsel for the press. If he was so, he was an unfeeling

one. He was proud of the appellation. But he confessed that he was a good deal surprised when his right hon. friend put in his claim to a share of the distinction. His right hon. friend had, by implication, questioned the use of the liberty of the press! Could his right hon. friend have been serious? Give me, said Mr. Sheridan, but the liberty of the press, and I will give to the minister a venal House of Peers—I will give him a corrupt and servile House of Commons—I will give him the full swing of the patronage of office—I will give him the whole host of ministerial influence—I will give him all the power that place can confer upon him to purchase up submission and overawe resistance; and yet armed with the liberty of the press, I will go forth to meet him undismayed; I will attack the mighty fabric he has reared with that mightier engine; I will shake down from its height corruption, and bury it beneath the ruins of the abuses it was meant to shelter. (Hear! hear!) His only object in the motion which he had submitted to the House was, not to prevent any individual member from clearing the gallery, but to require that after he had done so, he should condescend to give some reason for the step. The right hon. gent. opposite said, it was his humour. That was the very thing of which he complained. If, after the exclusion of strangers, the House should acquiesce in the propriety of the motives for that exclusion, the public would then be satisfied. To some of the opinions of his right hon. friend, he had listened with the greatest regret, and even horror. For the first time in his life, he had almost wished that the public had been excluded from hearing his opinions. The friendship which he had long entertained for his right hon. friend, and his regard for his right hon. friend's character and honour, struggling with his own sense of public duty, had nearly induced him to regret that there was a single stranger present to listen to or report his sentiments. His right hon. friend had asserted a broad general principle, that the publication of the proceedings of parliament was injurious to the country. He had declared, that when the doors of the gallery of that House were closed, the country had done well. He (Mr. S.) was not one of those who thought or spoke despondingly of the situation, or degradingly of the character of the country. On the contrary, he was of opinion that

Great Britain stood on a proud eminence, struggling as she was, and successfully struggling as he hoped she would be, for the liberties of the world. To what was it owing that she was able to maintain such a contest, and bid defiance to that powerful enemy, who had already overthrown every power against which he had directed his victorious arms, and trampled upon the rights and independence of the prostrate nations of Europe? All this he could attribute to the effect of the liberty of the press alone, and most particularly and emphatically to the unrestrained publication of the debates and proceedings of parliament. It had been asked by his right honourable friend, how such publication could produce any public benefit, or conduce to the well-being or happiness of the nation? To this he would answer, by shewing to the people the grounds upon which public measures were resorted to, and particularly by convincing them of their necessity; thus inducing the public to submit with patience to the heaviest burthens that had ever been imposed upon a nation. His right hon. friend had adverted to the state of the country in former times, when the press was bound in fetters, and the terrors of the Court of Star Chamber blighted every germ of freedom.—But he would tell that right honourable gentleman that the publicity given to all public measures, and especially to great measures of finance, in modern times, had been the principal, if not the sole means of reconciling the nation to a weight of taxes, which in these boasted periods of former excellence would neither have been thought of, nor supposed likely to be borne or endured by the country. He was sorry to hear his right hon. friend resorting to a topic, which he must be allowed to denominate the old bugbear, when he found him gravely asserting, that the practice of reporting the proceedings of that House, which had grown up of late, was likely to encourage revolutionary doctrines, or lead to a revolution. Could it for a moment be supposed that the people of this country, possessing the blessings of freedom, and in the enjoyment of all the benefits of their constitution, could, by reading the debates in that House, be induced to get rid of these blessings and that constitution? Yet, his right hon. friend had thought proper to state, that the freedom of the press, as acted upon in latter times, would, in all probability, reduce this country to the



same dreadful state of convulsion and disorder, in which France was involved during the period of her late sanguinary revolution. Was it, he would ask, the liberty of the press that had brought France into that dreadful state of anarchy and ruin, which characterised the revolution? Was it not, on the contrary, the suppression of all liberty of discussion—the prohibition of all publications not sanctioned by the permission of authority—the prevention of that rational and temperate consideration of public interests and measures, which alone could excite and nourish patriotic feelings and public spirit, that had caused all the mischiefs which had attended that revolution? What was it that had caused the downfall of all the nations of Europe? Was it the liberty of the press? No: It was the want of that salutary controul upon their governments, that animating source of public spirit and national exertion. If the liberty of the press had existed in France before or since the revolution—if it had existed in Austria—if in Prussia—if in Spain, Buonaparté would not now find himself in the situation to dictate to Europe, and filling the throne of nearly an universal monarch.—He did not mean to dwell longer on the speech of his right hon. friend, which he must say he had heard with more regret than any thing that had ever fallen from him, and which even the right hon. gentlemen opposite did not think fit to support. He had now but a few words to add on the speech of the right hon. gent. who had first moved the standing order. The principal argument that had been used by that right hon. gent. had been already refuted by the worthy baronet (sir F. Burdett) behind him, in so much that he was certain the right hon. gent. himself, would, on the slightest consideration, be convinced of its irrelevancy and inapplicability to the question of the inquiry before that House. The right hon. gent. had said that in the prosecution of that inquiry the House resembled a grand jury, and had triumphantly asked, whether they had ever heard of the admission of strangers to the grand jury room? But he would ask that right hon. gent., whether he had ever heard of a grand jury publishing the evidence produced before it, or the papers upon which it was called upon to come to a decision? The right hon. gent. seemed to have forgotten altogether that certain papers had been laid upon the table of that House, and

ordered to be printed; and that the oral evidence to be taken at the bar was called for, only to supply deficiencies in those papers, or to invalidate or confirm the statements they contained. The right hon. gent. if that was the only argument he could advance, could not support his doctrine, and indeed seemed only to be apprehensive upon the whole, lest he should himself be misrepresented in the course of the inquiry. Why did the grand jury not publish the evidence upon which it was bound to form a decision? Why, but because, as it could be but an *ex-parte* statement, they would not publish any thing in that shape, which might influence the opinion or verdict of the petty jury? The House was not in the situation of a grand jury, therefore, as it was essential to the proceeding in which it was engaged, to publish the documents upon which it was ultimately to form its decision. And here he could not but notice the consistency of the conduct of the right hon. gentleman. When on a former night the right hon. member had moved the standing order against strangers being suffered to be present, a noble friend of his (lord Osulston), not the noble mover of the inquiry, had pressed its observance with respect to certain peers, who continued under the gallery after the other strangers had withdrawn. To these peers the right hon. gent. was disposed to concede, what he was for withholding from the other strangers: that is, he would not suffer those, who had no immediate interest in the proceedings, to be present during their progress, whilst he had no objection to the presence of those whose conduct was upon trial. The right hon. gent. had stated, that he was not responsible to him; certainly he could not be (nor to any man), for his conduct, but to his constituents. This was a high and a proud feeling on the part of that right hon. gent.; but if he was not much misinformed and egregiously wrong, no very considerable time had elapsed since that right hon. gent. had betrayed an apprehension to meet his constituents. If his information was correct, or if rumour was to be depended on, in the tottering situation of the present government, they might have had the ministerial assistance of that right hon. gent. if he had not been afraid to look his constituents in the face, and appeal to their sense of his parliamentary conduct.—He had brought forward this motion with all the temper which such a subject and his respect for the House de-

manded; and if he had fallen into some warmth in his reply, it was because topics and arguments had been started in the course of discussion, which no gentleman, who had a particle of public principle, or any attachment to the liberty of the press, could listen to without protesting against them. He begged of gentlemen not to mistake his motion, which was not by any means to rescind the Order to which it applied, but to have it referred to the committee of privileges, in order to have it ascertained whether any, or what modification of it was necessary.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was sorry that he had not had an opportunity of stating the grounds of his vote before the right hon. gent. had proceeded to his reply. The right hon. gent. had asked, whether it was the intention of his Majesty's ministers to pass this question over in silence, and shelter themselves under the opinions delivered by the right hon. gent. (Mr. Windham.) He was ready to admit, that in most of what had fallen from that right hon. gent. he entirely concurred, though he was not prepared to carry his concurrence to the full extent of that right hon. gent.'s opinion, if, as he understood him, it went to the exclusion of strangers altogether from the House. But he thought it necessary, for the dignity of that House, to maintain the privilege, that any member could call for a vote without argument for the exclusion of strangers, whenever such a measure should appear to him to be necessary; and this was the ground of the vote he should give on this question.

A division then took place—

For Mr. Sheridan's motion - - 80

Against it - - - - - 166

Majority - - - - - —86

#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Thursday, February 8.*

[COMMERCE OF THE COUNTRY.] Earl Bathurst, agreeably to the statements contained in his Majesty's Speech on the first day of the session, presented certain Papers relative to the commercial prosperity of the country, consisting of Accounts of the amount of its Exports and Imports for the last two or three years. The noble earl, in laying these papers upon the table, took the opportunity of giving a general statement of the trade of the country for the three quarters ending the 10th October, 1809, compared with

the corresponding period of preceding years. The accounts of the fourth quarter, ending the 5th of January, he had not yet been able to obtain with sufficient accuracy. With respect to the three quarters ending the 10th October, 1809, our exports during that period amounted to 39 million. During the corresponding period in 1807, they were 29 million, and in 1808, 25 million. In 1806, which was reckoned a year of the greatest commercial prosperity, they amounted to 36 million. Our imports during the similar period in 1809 were, 22 million; in 1808, 17 million; 1807, 19 million. After dwelling upon the superior prosperity of our commerce during the last year, his lordship adverted to the arguments which had formerly been used by some noble lords as to the injury which would result to our commerce from our disputes with America, and observed, that the result had shown the fallacy of those arguments; for though some decrease had taken place in our trade with the United States, our commerce with the other parts of America had greatly increased. Thus instead of our exports to America, amounting to 20 million, including 12 million to the United States, they now amounted to 25 million, including 7 million to the United States. On the subject of cotton wool also, the fears entertained had proved groundless. A considerable supply of that article had been obtained from other parts of America, and might also be procured from the East Indies, two ships having arrived from thence with cotton wool, the produce of which rendered it a profitable speculation to those who imported it. After recapitulating the prosperous state of our American commerce, his lordship defended the firm and wise policy by which that prosperity had been secured, a policy which suggested to his Majesty's ministers, that it was not their duty to be impeded or biassed by the influence of either threats or intrigues, by the hostility of France, whether openly declared and exercised in Europe, or insidiously at work against us in America.

Lord Grenville rose, for the purpose of submitting to their lordships consideration some remarks upon the observations made by his noble friend, and also upon the papers, which had just been laid upon their lordships' table. It was not only surprising but it was a species of conduct of which no example was any where to be found but amongst his Majesty's pre-

sent ministers, that papers of such importance, should be laid upon their table, and a commercial question of such magnitude and detail should be brought into discussion without any previous notice. However, if it was not the noble earl's intention to move that the papers mentioned be printed; he should think it a duty incumbent upon him to make that motion himself. Did the noble earl, under all the calamity and disgrace brought upon the country by the ignorant and absurd measures of the administration, think it necessary to encourage the country to resist the power of France? Why there was not a man in whose breast the heart of an Englishman could be found to beat, who could ever entertain a doubt on the subject. God forbid that England should ever entertain the question, whether she should resolutely maintain her power, or sink beneath the power of France. As to the trade of the country, he was as much convinced as any man could be, that it was, in regard to our internal situation, increasing in prosperity. We had no occasion to be told that such prosperity was owing to our happy laws and constitution, and the industry of our people: the reason was an obvious one, and not more true than it was universally felt and acknowledged. But this prosperous increase of trade, so much, and so triumphantly spoken of by the noble earl this evening, was not to be taken as resulting from the measures of that blind policy adopted by noble lords opposite. It was a prosperity arising from the extended commercial genius of the country, from the benignant influence of our happy constitution, and the unexampled industry of our population; and happy for us it was so, because we thereby saw that our commerce could flourish in spite of the barriers opposed to it by the frail, imbecile, and mad proceedings of those who framed the Orders in Council. It would be useless at this time to enter into the detailed accounts given by the noble earl, for it was impossible for him to carry in his head all the numbers, sums, and figures mentioned, and as much so for those who heard him. But what did all this superficial and unsatisfactory statement of accounts amount to? Did it shew that our commerce had increased, because of its restrictions? The whole amounted to this and to this only, that, in consequence of the political situation of Spain, the Spanish colonies of America had been laid open

to our merchants; and, although we had lost our trade with the United States, this new intercourse, arising from an independent and distinct cause, had given it considerable increase. But, perhaps, were we rightly to estimate the consequence of these colonies being suddenly opened, upon the decrease of our trade to the United States, when there was a general effort to supply the market to an overflow, it might be a most damning proof of the injury which our commerce had sustained by means of the conduct of administration. He would ever maintain, that all legislative interference with the interests of commerce must invariably produce injurious consequences; but no legal fetters were so galling to commercial success, as those to which he alluded. If it was intended that trade should flourish, we ought to have it open and free to flow in its own course. Commercial policy, in these days, was better understood than heretofore; we ought not now to talk of the balance of trade, a doctrine so antiquated, and so proscribed by all men of enlightened views, that it was only fit for dark ages, and ought to be exploded by the philosophy of modern governments. So long as the Orders in Council were acted upon, so long they were found to be destructive to trade; and even their lordships, who were called upon, as friends of the ministers, to sanction the measure, as one of the soundest policy, soon afterwards had an opportunity of seeing those ministers themselves abandon that system. The result was, the moment a partial relaxation was adopted, the commerce of the country was benefited in the same proportion.

[VOTE OF THANKS TO LORD GAMBIER.] Lord *Mulgrave* on rising to make his motion for a Vote of their lordships' Thanks to lord Gambier, began, by alluding to the motion of earl Grosvenor, for the letter of the Admiralty to lord Cochrane, which he still thought could not bear directly upon the present question: though his lordship admitted the right of any noble lord to make such parliamentary use of any paper produced, as he might think fit. He thought this was a case, in which party feelings ought not to be suffered to operate; and adverted to the case of the Vote of Thanks to lord Keppel, and to the protest against the Vote of Thanks to lord Wellington for the glorious battle of Talavera. He considered the operations of the navy in Basque Roads, under the direction

and command of lord Gambier, as highly contributing to the honour, the advantage, and glory of the country, and fully deserving of their lordships thanks, the only reward almost which they had in their competence, to bestow. He could not agree with those who were so very nice and critical in voting the thanks of parliament to our brave officers. He never could reconcile himself to penuriousness in awarding to them the well earned meed of praise. The service that had been performed was of an unexampled description. The judgment, caution, and skill of the noble admiral under whom it was performed, as well as the courage and decision with which it was more immediately effected, called for their lordships' tribute of approbation and gratitude. No service ever demanded reward more amply. It was with great surprise, that he first heard that a noble lord, serving under the noble admiral, and a member of another House, had intimated his intention to oppose the Vote of the House of Commons, on the ground that his commander had not done his duty to the utmost.—The noble lord then entered into the details of the affair, complimenting highly capt. Beresford and admiral Stopford, who, with 7 sail of the line, kept 11 sail in check. The fireships were ordered here on the 14th of March. On the 19th lord Gambier wrote that the French ships could be attacked, stating also the attendant risks. On that very day lord Cochrane arrived at Plymouth. He had, on a former occasion, been employed in blockading Rochefort, and was acquainted with the coasts. He was therefore consulted; and he spoke with greater confidence of the success of the attempt than those who wrote from that quarter. It was not, however, merely the zeal and desire of exertion he showed, but also the talent and knowledge he displayed in meeting the objections started by naval men, which induced the Admiralty to employ his lordship, and write to lord Gambier to inform that noble admiral of his appointment; in doing which, there was not the least doubt insinuated, because none could possibly be entertained, of the merit of all the other officers in lord Gambier's fleet. In the course of the last century, there were two services performed by fire-ships, mentioned by his lordship; the first in 1702, at Vigo, and the second off Minorca, in 1792. But what was the present service? Recollect a fleet, protected by shoals and currents,

in sight of their own coast, and in presence of their countrymen. Nothing in the annals of our navy was more brilliant. The boom was broken by the Mediator, and the enemy's vessels were opposed to our fire-ships. Their ruin was then achieved, under the auspices and direction of lord Gambier. He trusted the report of opposition was unfounded. Our glory and our salvation depended upon parliament doing its duty to our brave military and naval defenders. But if party feelings should operate against those who had no other party than their country, we might find our bold and independent officers reluctant to place themselves in situations which might expose them to be too nicely sifted and cavilled at. His lordship concluded, with moving Thanks to lord Gambier for his zeal, judgment, ability, and attention to his Majesty's naval service, &c.

Lord *Holland* represented in strong terms the light in which ministers placed themselves before parliament and the country, by coming forward so hastily in the first instance to procure thanks, and then suddenly sending the noble admiral to a court martial, with the thanks on their lips. The noble lord opposite did not want the officers' conduct nicely sifted; but he thought that in a matter of parliamentary thanks, the case should be clear and strong to receive such a reward. What! said lord Cochrane, "look at and sift the log-book." He condemned the precipitancy of ministers, who, by their measures, endeavoured to stultify the House, as they had already stultified their own administration. After sending lord Gambier through the ordeal of a court martial, he now came down, pronounced his praises, and called on the House to vote him their thanks! It was not in this manner that the French government conducted itself to their admirals and generals. They instituted a very severe inquiry as to this affair at Basque Roads, and many of their commanders were most severely punished. They did not give thanks to general Monnet, for his defence of Flushing; but on the contrary, they censured his conduct most severely. If the barren thanks of both Houses of Parliament were often to be voted in this way, they would soon cease to be of any value. The noble lord who moved those thanks, had spoken a great deal about the battle of Talavera, and the resistance that was made to the Vote of Thanks in that instance. Now, it did not appear to him,

that the battle of Talavera had any thing to do with the action at Basque Roads, or with the conduct of lord Gambier. But if the resistance to the Vote of Thanks to lord Wellington was adduced as a proof of party motives, he thought it might as well be considered a proof of party spirit on the other side, to bring forward motions of thanks for services of such a description.

Lord Melville said, that in agreeing to the vote of thanks to lord Gambier, he thought he would be acting in conformity to the general sense of the House and the country. He could not, however, avoid making some observations on the conduct of the admiralty, which, he thought, a due regard to the discipline of the navy made necessary. He thought the admiralty was wrong in ordering a court-martial to be held on lord Gambier. When the letter of that noble lord was first published, there was no other feeling throughout the country but exultation and applause. It did not, at that time, occur to any one that he deserved to be brought to a court-martial. It appeared to him, that when the first lord of the admiralty first conceived it to be his duty to move the thanks of the House to lord Gambier, he ought not to have allowed himself to be stopped in what he felt was due to that noble lord, by any expressions which fell from a junior officer. Although the noble lord had been most honourably acquitted, yet, he must contend, that there was no sufficient cause for putting him on his trial, and subjecting him to such an ordeal. He must also say, that he conceived the admiralty to have acted extremely wrong in giving to a noble lord (lord Cochrane) a command, which was so contrary to the usual rules of the service, and which must have been so galling and disgusting to the feelings of the other officers in lord Gambier's fleet. He respected as much as any man the zeal, intrepidity, and enterprize of the noble lord (Cochrane), but it was wrong to presume that these qualities were wanting in the many brave captains of that fleet, who were in standing superior to his lordship. The making such a selection naturally put that noble lord upon attempting enterprizes by which great glory might be obtained by him personally, whereas the other noble lord (Gambier) was principally to attend to the safety of the whole fleet committed to his charge. Lord Gambier had sufficiently distinguish-

ed himself in the battle under lord Howe, and afterwards at Copenhagen, to make it unnecessary for him to deviate from the most prudent course, to add any thing to his professional character.

The Earl of Liverpool defended the conduct of the admiralty.

Earl Grosvenor did not think the services of lord Gambier of such a nature as to require the particular thanks of the House. He thought that they should only be given on very signal and important victories. Nobody could doubt that they were due to lord Howe for his victory on the 1st of June; to lord Duncan, for his victory at Camperdown; to lord St. Vincent, for his glorious achievements near that cape from which he took his title; or, to the immortal Nelson, for the splendid exploits with which he has adorned our naval history. These were things which spoke for themselves, and nobody could doubt the propriety of voting thanks, as it were, by acclamation. He thought, however, the services of lord Gambier were of a very inferior description, and called for no such reward.

Lord Grenville observed, that so much had been urged, and so little answered on the subject of the motion, that he should not have occasion to trouble their lordships at great length. If ever the thanks of that House should happen to be voted on principles of party feeling, their value would diminish, and they would no longer be the object of the valour and enterprize of our soldiers and seamen. Their lordships should reserve their thanks for great occasions; he would not say that this was not one; but as far as the admiralty could do, they had rendered it a matter of doubt. They had brought the noble admiral to a court-martial, not on the accusation, not on charges preferred by an inferior officer, but merely on his declaration, that, as a member of another House, he should feel himself obliged to oppose the thanks.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire regretted much that government had departed from the usual course upon such occasions; it was always customary, on hearing of any great victory, to vote the thanks, upon which principle lord Gambier should have been thanked in the first instance. He admitted that the service was important, and was persuaded that the public thought more highly of lord Gambier, since the court-martial, than before it; he, for his part, would give the thanks to the noble

lord for having destroyed the enemy's ships; and also for having withstood that advice, which was calculated to hurry him into a course of conduct, the consequence of which must have been greater loss to the fleet which he commanded.

The *Lord Chancellor* thought that party should not interfere in questions of this nature. If the thanks of parliament were merited, they ought not to be given under circumstances which went to lessen their value, nor should any other question be agitated upon such occasions, not connected with the point at issue. A noble viscount had censured the appointment of lord Cochrane, though he had often said before, that that was not the place to discuss the propriety of such appointments. He entered into a justification of the government in granting the court-martial, which, especially as lord Gambier himself had applied for it, he considered it was right to appoint; nor could he see, if it was right to vote for the thanks before the court-martial, that it could be wrong to vote for them after. The question of the court-martial affected the government alone, and was in no way connected with the merits or demerits of his lordship.

Lord *Sidmouth* conceived that there were two questions for the consideration of the House. First, If there was sufficient evidence to have induced them to grant the thanks of the House to lord Gambier before the court martial took place. And, secondly, If any thing had there occurred to render questionable a circumstance of which, previous to that time, there could have been no doubt? His lordship was of opinion, that, in both these respects, an answer in favour of the noble gallant admiral must be given. It was impossible not to say, that previous to the question in consequence of which the court martial was granted, every thing seemed highly honourable to the gallant and noble lord; and it was equally indisputable, that, the event of the court martial had added to, rather than detracted from the merits of the noble and gallant admiral.

Earl *Darnley* had no objection to the vote of thanks; but at the same time, he thought this one of the efforts now too often resorted to, by voting thanks to the officers employed, to throw a false lustre on the government. To attempt to compare the service rendered to the country by the achievement in question, with the battles of the Nile or of Trafalgar, would be the height of presumption.

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The question was then put and agreed to.

The votes of thanks to the other officers, non-commissioned officers, sailors, and marines, &c. were also passed *nem. dis.*

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, February 8.

[MIDDLESEX PETITION RESPECTING A REFORM IN PARLIAMENT.] Mr. *Byng* presented a Petition of the freeholders of the county of Middlesex, in full county assembled, setting forth "That, on the 6th of May 1793, a Petition was presented to the House, in which it is averred, that 307 of the honourable members for England and Wales only are not returned to parliament by the suffrages of the people, but are, though numerous breaches and evasions of the freedom of election, therein fully set forth, appointed by 154 Peers and Commoners, and that evidence in proof of the facts contained in such Petition was tendered in support thereof; and the allegations, so stated in the said Petition, still stand on the Journals of the House uncontradicted; and that by the Statute commonly called the septennial act the same House of Commons may sit for a period equal to one half of the probable duration of human life taken at the most favourable age; and that the right of the Commons to send representatives to parliament was, by our ancient constitution, vested in the freeholders and householders, and long parliaments were heretofore as unknown as the modern practice of members procuring their seats in the House by purchase, nomination, or by barter of patronage; and that every departure from this undoubted right of the people to a substantial representation in short parliaments was a violation of the fundamental principles of the constitution, and is a grievance dangerous alike to the liberties and property of the people: and that this deplorable state of the representation co-operating with the septennial duration of parliaments, has an alarming tendency to destroy that constitutional balance which ought to subsist between the three branches of the legislature, and threatens the free subjects of these realms with a tyranny more hateful and degrading than a despotic monarchy—the usurpation of our rights by an oligarchy of the proprietors of boroughs; and that the elective franchise ought to be entrusted to those.

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and to those only, who are likely to exercise it for the common good, which, by the act passed in the last session of parliament, to regulate the disposal of seats in the House, the petitioners conclude not to be the case in the venal or depopulated boroughs: in the wisdom and justice of the House the petitioners confidently rely, that the House will take their Petition into their early and most serious consideration, and will grant them such relief in the premises as shall be most consistent with that leading principle of our happy constitution, a full and free representation of the people in parliament."—Ordered to lie upon the table.

[**KING'S MESSAGE RESPECTING AN ANNUITY TO LORD WELLINGTON.**] The Chancellor of the Exchequer brought down a Message from the King, which the Speaker read from the chair as follows:—

"George R.—His Majesty being desirous of conferring a signal mark of his favour and approbation on lieutenant-general Arthur lord viscount Wellington, knight of the most honourable order of the Bath, in consequence of the eminent services rendered by him in the brilliant and decisive victory obtained by the troops under his command, against a superior French force at Talavera on the 28th day of July, 1809, and of the valour and skill displayed by him on that occasion, recommends it to his faithful Commons to enable his Majesty to make provision for securing to the said lieutenant-general Arthur lord viscount Wellington, and the two next succeeding heirs on whom the titles of viscount Wellington of Talavera, and of Wellington in the county of Somerset, and of baron Douro, of Wellesley, in the said county, shall descend, a net annuity of 2,000*l.*, in such manner as shall be thought most effectual for the benefit of the said lord viscount Wellington, and his family.     G. R."

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Friday, February 9.*

[**VOTE OF THANKS TO LORD GAMBIER.**] The *Lord Chancellor* addressed lord Gambier to the following purport,—“Baron Gambier, I am requested to inform you that this House has passed an unanimous Vote of Thanks for the skill, zeal, ability, and anxious attention which you so eminently displayed against the enemy in Basque roads, whereby you were enabled,

under the greatest disadvantages, to destroy the enemy's ships, enjoying a peculiar situation amidst their shoals, and under the imagined security of their shores. The eminent services, baron Gambier, which you displayed on former occasions in the cause of your King and your country, have not escaped the recollection of this House. It is remembered, when his Majesty thought you worthy of the high honours which he conferred, this House also considered you entitled to the greatest reward it could bestow, namely, their thanks, and on that occasion you were pleased to express yourself in the strongest terms of gratitude for the favour bestowed, and to pledge yourself that it should be the endeavour of your future life to evince your grateful remembrance by devoting yourself to the best service of your country. Baron Gambier, the House have also at this time to thank you for those recent services which have completely proved the truth of your former pledge. I have likewise to observe, that a distance of time has elapsed since you performed those services for which you now receive the thanks of this House, but the time which has intervened has tended only to prove more strongly the character which you have always maintained, and the justness of your title to the distinguished honour now conferred upon you. It is not for me, baron Gambier, to mingle any feelings of my own with the high honours of this House, but I may be permitted to add that I feel a personal gratification in communicating the thanks of this House, to you a second time, and I am more particularly disposed to feel so from the personal respect I bear towards yourself.”

Lord Gambier returned answer, in purport, as follows: “My Lords, I am fully sensible of the honour conferred upon me, by the vote of thanks which your lordships have been pleased unanimously to bestow. No greater reward can possibly be given to any man than the thanks of this House; and no greater inducement can be held out to stimulate the zeal and exertions of those who serve in the cause of their country. If, my Lords, on former occasions, I was led to consider this attention to my services as an obligation, I do now, and shall in future, still endeavour to entertain every due sense of such distinguishing favour. I have also, my lord, to acknowledge my obligation to you for the condescending and gracious manner in which you have conveyed to

me the thanks of this House, and the kindness with which you have expressed your own feelings on this occasion.”

[**LORD WELLINGTON.**] The Earl of *Liverpool* moved the order of the day, for taking into consideration his Majesty's Message, recommending it to that House to concur in the measure for granting a Pension to lord Wellington. On a former occasion, when he had the honour of moving the thanks of that House to that noble viscount for his brilliant and important services in the battle of Talavera, he had little expectation that his motion would have encountered any opposition; but in that hope he had been disappointed, and perhaps his present motion was destined to meet with a similar opposition. He should beg it, however, to be recollected that lord Wellington's services were not confined to the battle of Talavera only; that the noble viscount had performed important and splendid services in other climates and countries, and that within a very short period he had twice delivered the ancient and faithful ally of this country from the unjust domination of the enemy. Whether, therefore, the House had to consider the number or the importance of lord Wellington's exploits, they must think him eminently entitled to any mark of favour and reward which it was in their power to bestow. A similar reward had often been granted for a single action, where no previous service of any magnitude had been achieved; but on the present occasion, it was a series of brilliant services, which the House had to acknowledge and remunerate. He did not think it necessary to dwell any longer on a subject which called not for any argument to enforce it; but should content himself with moving, “That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, assuring his majesty that this House would cheerfully concur in the measure to which his Majesty's most gracious Message referred.”

Earl *Grey* said, that having already stated the reasons why he objected to the Vote of Thanks, and entered his opinion on the Journals, he should not now trouble the House further on the subject; especially as, if the bill came up from the other House, there would be other opportunities of discussion. He begged to say, however, that he retained his opinions formerly delivered on this subject. He must therefore give his negative to the motion.

The Duke of *Norfolk* thought, that

there was great valour, and no doubt, skill, shewn in the battle of Talavera; but it was called “a decisive victory,” to which appellation he could not possibly think it entitled. The immediate results of the engagement were by no means the proper usual consequences of a victory.

The Address was carried without a division.

[**NAVAL REVISION.**] Lord *Melville* rose to make the motion of which notice was given in his name by the earl of *Aberdeen*. His lordship said, that this was a question which ought to have no relation to, nor be influenced by party feelings, as it was one which concerned only the essential interests of the country. In the time that lord Howe was at the head of the admiralty, and sir Charles Middleton of the navy board, a practice prevailed which had not prevailed since; that of keeping a regular digest of the regulations and rules for the direction of the dock yards and the administration of the civil service generally of the navy. There had been no revision of the rules or the practice on this subject till recently, since the times when the duke of York was lord high admiral a century ago. His lordship here entered into a review of the Reports of Naval Revision which contained a very useful history of the navy of Great Britain. He wished to impress on the House, first, that all the Reports of the committee of Naval Revision were originally made not as containing plans for permanent and final adoption, but suggestions for trial, and as experiments to receive improvements from the result of experience, and the well-founded opinions of those who are competent to advise upon the subject. All the Reports which had been placed in the hands of the King, and since produced to that House, as well as the four Reports which had not been laid before them, were to be considered as having the character he described. He could give a variety of illustrations of this opinion from various parts of the Reports; but it was impossible to enter into such a detail, without engrossing too much of their lordships' time. He should particularly notice one circumstance in the Reports, and that was the great difference in the modes of keeping the accounts therein suggested; one in an early Report on the admiralty board, concerning the dock yards; the other, in the 11th Report, respecting the Victualling board. He shewed, in an extract of a Letter from the



commissioners to the admiralty, written after the 15th Report had been made, that they there again urged the propriety of a revision of their former Reports; and in that letter they said, that since their 1st Report, material improvements had suggested themselves in the modes they had previously recommended. He therefore maintained this conclusion, that these Reports were now open for farther revision and alteration, before the regulations they recommended should be rendered permanent; and that it was necessary they should be revised and amended until brought to a state of absolute perfection. It appeared that the 6th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 12th and 13th Reports had been presented to the King on the 7th of Sept. 1808, that after remaining but one day before the council, they had been sent to the Admiralty board, and five days after were returned to his Majesty for the purpose of having the recommendations they contained carried into execution. These six voluminous Reports therefore had passed the council and the Admiralty board, without much consideration. He supposed, from this haste, that the board did not intend to revise them. The subordinate boards, with the diligence which, he knew, characterized them, were now acting upon them, certainly contrary to the intentions of the commissioners themselves, because the Reports could only be considered as experimental. If there were a difference between the two modes of accounting recommended, and one mode were preferable to the other, let it be seen whether there was any thing so different in the construction of the two offices which prevented the application of similar principles.—The revision of which he was desirous, and which was so necessary, could not be left either to the Admiralty or Navy boards; not from their want of ability for that purpose; but for reasons stated in the very patent that established the commission; "that it was impossible, during the war, and with the pressing daily and hourly duties of those boards, for them to undertake such laborious investigations." No money could have been better laid out for the public service, than a few thousand pounds to provide for the continuance of the commission, till the commissioners should have revised their former reports. He had reason now to lament that the period most convenient for this revision had passed without affording an opportunity to the commissioners, for again revising

the reports which they had made on this most interesting subject. With respect to the commissioners, some alteration had taken place since their appointment; for instance, the advanced period of life of one, lord Barham, had rendered it necessary he should retire from the labour of official business, and another (Mr. For-dyce) whose ability, integrity and capacity for business were exemplary, had died within the period assigned to the discharge of their duty. He complimented highly the talents of the several commissioners, and it was also to be recollected how important and arduous a duty attached itself to the revision of naval affairs. They were bound to extend their researches to a period as far distant as that when the duke of York presided at the head of the Admiralty in the reign of Charles the second. Lord Barham was much advanced in years, and might not be inclined to re-engage in such labours: but sir Roger Curtis, Mr. Serle, and admiral Domett remained, though even they might be fully employed in other services. If lord Barham were willing to resume his labours, and the commission could be revived, he should be glad. At the same time, he trusted ministers would not conceive he was calling upon them to institute another commission of naval revision. He knew too well the inconveniences which would result from the institution of a second commission. His only object in addressing their lordships upon this important subject was to direct their lordships attention to the importance of those Reports upon the table. The noble viscount concluded by moving "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, requesting that he will be pleased to inform the House what steps had been taken conformably to the Report of the Commissioners for Naval Inquiry; and whether it was the intention of his Majesty's ministers to act on the recommendation of that Report."

Lord Mulgrave was not fully prepared to make that reply which perhaps would be most consistent with the motion of the noble viscount. With regard to the propriety of many of his observations, no one would question their real importance. But no one more than the noble viscount ought to be convinced, from experience, that considerable confidence ought to be placed in those who directed the affairs of the admiralty. It was not his own wish that these Reports should, in their present

state, have been presented to the House, but he had acquiesced in the desire of others whose minds were not satisfied on the subject and who had urged their production. He agreed with the statement made, that from the time when the duke of York presided in the Admiralty many irregularities and abuses had crept into the different civil departments of the navy, which in 1805 led to the appointment of the commissioners of Naval Revision. In the first instance they were appointed for a limited time only, but towards the end of that period they found it impossible to accomplish what they had been appointed to execute. Their suggestion of the difficulties they encountered led to the extension of their appointment for a few months longer. But by those who directed the government at the time even this grant of a longer period was given with a considerable degree of reluctance. In the course of a short period those who succeeded in administration, were more favourably disposed to continue the labours of their commissioners for a still longer period than the utmost limit prescribed to them by their predecessors. He was sure those labours had produced considerable benefit already, and, with the noble viscount, he entertained great regard for the Reports themselves. It had been asserted that six of these Reports, very voluminous in their bulk, had been but one day before the council board, from whence they were referred the day after to the Admiralty board, and in the course of five days were returned to his Majesty that they might forthwith be acted upon. But whatever measures had been taken with respect to them, he could assure the noble viscount, had been resorted to upon a conviction of their utility to the public service. He did not clearly understand the object to be attained by the motion before them, but he presumed the noble viscount meant to infer, either negligence, or precipitancy in the council board, and that of the admiralty. But as to any fact stated relative to the mode in which the recommendation contained in the Reports had been carried into execution, it ought to be recollected, that one of these commissioners, admiral Domett was, perhaps, of all men the most competent, from his talents and persevering industry, to carry into execution every improvement in our naval department. It was from him he (lord Mulgrave) gained that satisfactory information, upon which he could rely, and which induced the

adoption of any measure that without more detailed and deliberate consideration, might be termed hasty. The difference between the regulations of the dock yards, and those of the victualling yards, had been strongly impressed upon their lordships as calling for immediate alteration. These regulations had certainly been adopted in conformity to the Reports; still the difference resulted from the distance of time which elapsed between revisions of the one and those of the other. He must allow with the noble viscount, that the regulations of the victualling yards were more simplified in all respects than those of the dock yards, where unnecessary accounts were kept, and many clerks and other persons employed, who were of no real benefit to their management, and the innumerable books which were kept, were no more useful than so much waste paper. But independent of all these considerations, he did not perceive the utility of the noble viscount's interference, for he trusted some confidence ought to be placed as he said before, in those who presided over this department. With respect to those Reports, which were not then on the table, there were two of which he would never consent to the production, at least at the present time. One of these Reports was the eighth, which related to Northfleet, and he should be extremely sorry to see it produced, for thereby the contents might transpire, and reach the enemy, which would be injurious to the best interests of the country. These reasons would also prevent the production of another report, which regarded the supplying of timber for the British navy. He would at no time consent to the production of this report. He was upon the whole surprised that the noble viscount should have been so much alarmed, as to hasten to the capital for the purpose of giving his advice upon the present state of our navy. There was not much to fear, for such had been the growing prosperity of the British fleet, from the time when the duke of York presided as lord high admiral, down to the present times, that if the whole of these Reports had been burnt, or torn to pieces, and lost to the country, he could assure their lordships the navy of this country would, in spite of every abuse, still prosper; therefore, it was certainly remarkable that the noble viscount's imagination should have been so much alarmed at phantoms, as to induce him to set out in the midst of winter

from the extremity of Scotland, anxious to lend his assistance for the purpose of saving our navy from destruction. The noble lord concluded by moving the previous question.

Lord Melville rose to explain. He had not made, nor did he mean to make, the slightest reflection on that excellent officer, admiral Domett. He was confident that many parts of the reports, not yet produced, might be given without any danger whatever; and he would inform the noble lord, that he should move on a future occasion for such parts as might, without public detriment, be produced. He denied that he made any charge of rashness or neglect against the noble lord. Whenever he should feel it his duty to do so, he should take care that the noble lord should understand his intentions. As to what had been said of his leaving retirement and coming up to town, he supposed that the noble lord intended it for the purpose of amusement, and to his amusement he had no particular objection. He then regretted the decay of ship-timber here, and alluded to the two commissions of the House of Commons in 1774 and 1792: His opinion was in favour of constructing the proposed dock at Northfleet, the expence of which the public affairs could, for such a purpose, very well spare, if the finances were well managed, and not wasted on fruitless exertions.

The previous question was put and agreed to.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Friday, February 9.*

[WESTMINSTER PETITION RESPECTING A REFORM IN PARLIAMENT.] Sir Francis Burdett presented a Petition of the inhabitant householders, electors of the City and liberty of Westminster, assembled in New Palace Yard, the 9th day of February 1810, by the appointment of Arthur Morris, Esq. the high bailiff, in consequence of a requisition for that purpose, signed by several inhabitant householders, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, "That in a Petition presented to the House, by Charles Grey, esq. (now earl Grey), on Monday the 6th day of May 1793, and which Petition was entered on the Journals of the House, it was averred and offered to be proved, "That the House of Commons did not fully and fairly repre-

sent the people of England;" "That the elective franchise was so partially and unequally distributed that a majority of the House was elected by less than a two hundredth part of the male population." "That the right of voting was regulated by no uniform or rational principle." "That Rutland" the smallest, and "Yorkshire" the largest County, "returned the same number of representatives." "That Cornwall," which by the census taken by order of parliament appears to contain a population of 188,260, "returns as many members to the House as the counties of York, Rutland, and Middlesex," which by the same census, contains 1,693,377." "And that Cornwall and Wiltshire," containing 373,376 persons, "sent more Borough members to parliament than Yorkshire, Lancashire, Warwickshire, Middlesex, Worcestershire, and Somersetshire united" which contain 2,971,025. "That 70 of the members are returned by 35 places where the elections are notoriously mere matters of form." "That in addition to the 70 so chosen, 90 more of the members are elected by 46 places, in none of which the number of electors exceed fifty." "That in addition to the 160 so elected, 37 more of the members are elected by 19 places, in none of which the number of electors exceed 100." "That in addition to the 197 members so elected, 52 more are returned by 26 places, in none of which the number of voters exceed two hundred." "That in addition to the 249 so elected, 20 more are returned for counties in Scotland by less than 100 electors each; and 10 for counties in Scotland by less than 250 each." "That in addition to the 279 so elected, 13 districts of Burghs in Scotland not containing 100 voters each, and 2 districts of Burghs, not containing 125 each, return 15 more of the members." "That in this manner 294 of the members are chosen, which being a decided majority of the entire House of Commons, are entitled to decide all questions in the name of the whole people of Great Britain." "That 84 individuals do, by their own immediate authority, send 157 of the members to parliament." "That in addition to these 157 members, 150 more, making in the whole 307, are returned to the House, not by the collective voice of those whom they appear to represent, but by the recommendation of 70 powerful individuals, added to the 84 before-men-

tioned, and making the total number of patrons altogether only 154, who return a decided majority of the House." "That no less than 150 of the honourable members owe their election entirely to the interference of peers; and that 40 peers, in defiance of the resolutions of the House, have possessed themselves of so many burgage tenures, and obtained such an absolute and uncontrouled command in very many small boroughs in the kingdom, as to be enabled by their own positive authority to return eighty-one of the honourable members." "That seats in the House are sought for at a most extravagant and increasing rate of expence." "That the means taken by the candidates to obtain, and by electors to bestow, the honour of a seat in the House, evidently appear to have been increasing in a progressive degree of fraud and corruption." And the petitioners are of opinion, that if the representation of the people in the House had not been very defective and unequal, they should not now have to complain of the sad effects produced by several unfortunate and destructive wars, or of the immense debt and taxes with which the country is burthened. They lament that the House have not thought fit to take the petition containing the above allegations into their serious consideration; the more so, as since the time it was entered on the Journals of the House the above causes cannot but have increased the number of corrupt persons who barter for seats; and it is with grief we state, that when a direct and distinct charge was made in the House on the 11th day of May last, against lord Castlereagh and Mr. Perceval, members thereof, and who at the same time were two of his Majesty's ministers, of having sold a seat therein, that the House refused to institute any inquiry; the petitioners are therefore compelled to conclude, that the only alternative which is left to the country is a radical Reform in the representation, or a final extinction of its liberties. And that they cannot conceal from the House, their apprehensions that the prayer of this their petition will not be attended to, until it be too late, but the petitioners will in any event have the satisfaction arising from a conscientious discharge of the duty they owe their country. And that the petitioners most earnestly request that the House will, at an early day, cause inquiry to be made into the present defective state of the representation, and

adopt such other means as shall prevent the choice of representatives from being committed to select bodies of men of such limited numbers as render them an easy prey to the artful, or a ready purchase to the wealthy. To shorten the duration of parliaments; and, by removing the causes of that confusion, litigation, and expence with which they are at this day conducted, to render frequent and new elections, what our ancestors at the revolution asserted them to be, the means of a happy union between the king and the people." Ordered to lie upon the table.

[CRIMINAL LAW].—Sir S. Romilly said, that in consequence of the notice he had given in the last and the present sessions, he now rose to bring under the consideration of the House, some parts of the Criminal Law of this country; and whatever might be the effect of the motion with which he should trouble the House, he had the consolation to feel that he was but discharging his duty, and was not without great hopes, that what he had to state on the subject must be productive of public good. If he succeeded, he should congratulate the country, and feel great happiness on his having effected what he conceived to be a considerable amendment in the criminal law. It was not his intention to propose any other alteration than on two subjects; first, the frequency of capital punishments; secondly, what had been thought the policy and expediency of transporting persons for life, or for a certain number of years, to New South Wales. On the present occasion, he only meant to take notice of capital punishments. On a future occasion, he would bring forward the subject of transportation. As to the former he believed there was no country on the face of the earth in which there had been so many different offences according to law to be punished with death as in England. The indiscriminate application of the sentence of death to offences exhibiting very different degrees of turpitude had long been a subject of complaint in this country, but it had still been progressive and increasing. He need only refer to those principles so universally and triumphantly established by Dr. Adam Smith, very few of which had been acted upon, to prove this point. In his opinion, nothing could be more erroneous or more mischievous than that certain punishments should be allotted to particular offences, and that the law so laid down should not be acted on, and peremptorily enforced.

He believed that, at this moment, not one out of six or seven who received sentence suffered the punishment annexed by law to their respective offences. It was supposed by some persons that the severity of the law might and ought to be mitigated, by the extension of mercy; but this he thought a very mistaken principle; for he thought no laws should be enacted that were not intended to be enforced. There were, indeed, some acts in our Statute book which one could not hear read without horror, and which it was almost impossible to conceive could have found their way into it. Such, for instance, as the Act which makes it a capital offence in any person, male or female, to be seen in the company of gypsies for the space of a month. That Act had, however, been enforced for nearly a century; and it was lamentable to think, that no less than 13 persons had been executed under its cruel provisions at one assizes. There was the greatest reason to believe that our criminal code had, in ancient times, been not only most sanguinary but as sanguinarily executed. Fortescue, who was Chief Justice of the King's bench and afterwards lord chancellor to Henry VI. in his excellent treatise on absolute and limited monarchy, which was written during his residence in France, for the instruction of prince Edward, the son of that unfortunate monarch, relates, that there were more persons in England yearly executed for highway robberies alone, than in France for all other crimes in seven years. In the reign of Henry VIII. it is stated by Hollinshead and other credible historians, that about 72,000 persons were executed, which was after the rate of about 2,000 a year, during the reign of that monarch. In queen Elizabeth's time the number of executions fell to about 400 a-year. From that period to modern times, there were no data upon which to go. Sir Stephen Theodore Janssen, who was sometime Chamberlain of the City of London, published tables (which are to be found in Mr. Howard's book) of the number of persons convicted and executed in London and Middlesex, from 1749 to 1772: the result of which went to shew; that of 428 persons convicted, 306 were executed, being a proportion of about three executions to four convictions.—From the year 1756 to 1764, the executions amounted to about one half; and, from 1764 to 1771, to more than a half. This brought the account to the end of

the first ten years of his present Majesty's reign. In succeeding periods, a great diminution had taken place in the proportion between the number of convictions and the number of executions. In the London district, from 1801 to 1809, only about one-eighth of the persons convicted were executed. In 1808, there had been convicted 87, and only three executed, which was but one in 29.—He had been thus particular in stating the number convicted, to shew, how little the penal laws had operated in the prevention of crimes. In those offences in which the perpetrators could not expect mercy, such as murders, rapes, arson, &c. it could not be expected any alteration in the law should take place; but stealing privately in a shop or in a dwelling-house, with many other offences of the like class, if the capital part of the punishment was taken off, the law might be made more effectual; for people offended against them now, under a certainty that they would not incur the punishment. In the number of persons whose guilt was supposed to be such as that they should be sent to trial for stealing in dwelling-houses, the House would be astonished to find, that in the persons committed in London and Middlesex, in seven years, there have been executed only as 8 to 1,802; and since that only one had been executed out of 1,872. In the other parts of the kingdom, he believed they were in a proportion of one to upwards of 3,000. So that, on an average of 7,196 persons committed for trial for those offences in the years 1808 and 1809, which the law calls capital offences, only one had been executed. Thus if the question were to be fairly considered, as to what the execution had been, it might be said the law had been unexecuted. In bringing this subject before the House, he hoped he should not, as he had been on former occasions, be represented as a person wishing to be thought possessed of more refined feelings and a greater degree of humanity than his neighbours. He had no such ideas in his mind, but in what he did was actuated as much by a desire for the public good, as for that of individuals; and he was particularly induced to bring this matter before the House, from a conviction in his own mind, that the non-execution of the law in the infliction of those punishments he had alluded to, was the cause of crimes, by holding out a prospect of impunity. The circumstances of the times rendered it im-

possible that all the convictions for this species of offence should be carried into effect. Judges, jurors, prosecutors, and the crown, all felt sensible that it was impossible for the statutes in these cases to be carried into effect. This alone was sufficient for all reasonable men, that such inefficient and inapplicable laws ought no longer to remain on the statute book. It frequently happened, that parties were deterred from bringing depredators to punishment, from the severity of the penalty which would be the result of their conviction, and persons were thereby led to the perpetration of crimes by the impunity which was held out to delinquents. As the law was at present put in force, the judges on the circuits, and ministers of the crown in London, decided against whom the sentence of the law should be put in force. This he could not help considering as an unpleasant duty to be committed to any hands. When saying this, however, he was far from meaning to say any thing against the judges of the present day, or those who are gone. He did not recollect any one that had not acted to the best of his judgment according to the intention of the laws, as they stand at present. But if this practice was to be continued, the Legislature should prescribe certain rules to go by in every case. He would not, however venture at present to introduce any great change into our criminal code, but would only suggest, that mere violations of property, unattended with any circumstances of personal violence, or dangerous effects to commerce, ought to be exempted from capital punishments. He had it in view to move for a repeal of the acts of king William 3, which made it a capital felony to steal in a shop to the value of 5s.; the act of queen Anne to a similar effect against stealing to the value of 40s. in a dwelling-house; and the act of George 2, against stealing to the like value from any bark or vessel in any river or navigable canal, or on a wharf, for any of which offences persons found guilty, on conviction were liable to the penalty of death. It was true that the extreme penalty of the law was very rarely put in execution against such offenders; but this was not owing to the leniency of the laws, but to the practice which had of late years been adopted, of suffering such matters to be decided according to the opinion of the judge before whom the matter was tried. This practice of leaving to the discretion of the

judge before whom a cause was tried, the sentence which was to be carried into execution, was severely condemned by sir Matthew Hale and lord Bacon. He thought the discretionary power at present granted to the judges highly dangerous, and such as no men would desire to be vested with. In some cases, the nature of a prisoner's defence, when he had attempted to prove his innocence by *alibis*, which the judge had thought ill established, has gone against him. Sometimes it was held as a matter of aggravation, that the offence was committed in a place where such offences were rare, and therefore that they ought to be checked, or that they were common, and therefore ought to be punished to prevent their multiplication. Many instances might be adduced of the different judgments which had been pronounced upon the same offence by different judges.—The hon. and learned gentleman exemplified this by some cases which had fallen under his own observation, as having happened of late years. Some years ago, on the Norfolk Circuit, two men were indicted for stealing poultry in a poultry-yard. One of them made his escape, the other was tried before lord Loughborough at the assizes, and convicted; but having been till then a person of good character, and this his first offence, lord Loughborough thought these circumstances deserving consideration, and only sentenced him to six months imprisonment. The other man who had fled, hearing this, and desirous to see his family, again returned, and surrendered himself. He was tried before Mr. Justice Gould, who, unfortunately for him, had a different idea from his brother judge, and thinking, as it was a first offence, it would be an example more for the public good to punish him severely, sentenced him to transportation for seven years: so that as the first of these culprits was coming out of his confinement, the other was setting out on his voyage beyond the seas. He alluded also to a similar instance in the case of duelling, in which the opinion of one judge was, that killing a man in a duel was certainly murder in the eye of the law; but that it had so long been alleviated, from various considerations, that it was seldom brought in more than manslaughter, and the jury gave a verdict accordingly. In the other case, the judge was of a different opinion; the verdict was for murder, and the unhappy gentleman was executed.—On the contrary, if

this discretion was given by positive law, every man would know what he had to expect. The most able defence of this system was to be found in the works of the late Dr. Paley, the excellence of whose writings in general had given him a credit that had had a very mischievous effect, from the errors others had imbibed from this particular part of them. He then went into a long investigation of what Dr. Paley had said on this subject, of capital punishment, and urged many arguments in order to refute his doctrine, in which he endeavoured to shew that Dr. Paley took for granted the very thing in dispute. The hon. and learned gent. concluded by moving, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to repeal so much of the acts of the 10th and 11th of William 3. as takes away the benefit of clergy from persons privately stealing in any shop, warehouse, coach-house or stable, any goods, wares, or merchandizes of the value of five shillings, and for more effectually preventing the crimes of stealing privately in shops, warehouses, coach-houses or stables."

Mr. *Windham* was somewhat surprised to hear, and particularly from his honourable and learned friend, who had just sat down, such animadversions as he had made upon a writer, whose works had done more for the moral improvement of mankind than perhaps the writings of any other man that had ever existed. The doctrines laid down and established by that wise and able writer might be considered as the principia of moral philosophy. They rested upon a basis which was not to be shaken by fanciful theories or crude speculations. The system of morality contained in Dr. Paley's works was founded on the nature and moral fitness of mankind, and until man should become a different being from what he is at present, that system would continue to be the wisest and the justest for the guidance and government of mankind. The character and authority of that great and good man, stood so justly and eminently high in universal estimation, that he should have thought it unnecessary to say any thing in vindication of his writings. But when they were assailed from such a quarter and by such a man as his hon. and learned friend, he would not suffer the attack to pass silently off, or without entering his protest against any attempt to decry them. Having said thus much, not in defence of Dr. Paley, for that was

quite unnecessary, but in order to acquit himself of any implied acquiescence in the attack made upon his principles, he should next proceed to consider the merits of his hon. and learned friend's motion. So far as he attested his object from his speech, it appeared to him that his learned friend wished to take away all discretion in the infliction of punishments. To this principle he could not assent, for he was persuaded that no good and much mischief would result from the entire exclusion of discretion from the laws. But he would readily admit that the discretion if left in existence ought to be on the side of remission and not of aggravation. If his hon. and learned friend's principle were to be adopted, and all discretion taken away, there would then be an end to that most amiable and endearing attribute of majesty, the power of extending mercy. He would grant, however, that the discretion, which, with Dr. Paley, he thought ought to exist somewhere, should be regulated by certain known and fixed rules, and also, that so far as words were capable of doing it, the intention of the legislature on this head should be accurately defined. He feared it was impossible to attain the end which his hon. and learned friend had in view, unless indeed we could reach the perfection of law, by which every offence, which ought to be punished, would be punished, and no act deserving it should escape punishment. As this perfection of law was unattainable, he could not concur with his hon. and learned friend in taking away that discretion in the administration of the laws, which was actually necessary to correct their inevitable imperfection. But if he could not assent to that principle of excluding all discretion, he had equally strong objections to the manner in which his hon. and learned friend proposed to transfer whatever portion of discretion might be suffered to remain from the judges to juries. (No, no, said sir Samuel Romilly.) He had certainly understood his hon. and learned friend to have so stated his principle. (No, no, repeated sir S. Romilly.) Well he should not persist in pressing his interpretations of his hon. and learned friend's sentiments against so positive a denial, but would contend that as a discretion must be left somewhere, it would be much better that it should rest with the judges than with juries. Whatever might be the limits applied to discretion, there must still be a gradation

not only of offences, but of guilt in different perpetrators of the same legal offence, and there must necessarily exist in some living tribunal a power to proportion the punishment to the degree of moral guilt. The right hon. gent. then reverted to the vindication of the doctrines of Dr. Paley, and after stating to them to be impregnable to assault, and unaffected by the arguments of his hon. and learned friend, he concluded by saying, that the best defence he could make for Dr. Paley would be to leave his writings to vindicate themselves, and expressing a hope that gentlemen would consider them attentively before they should decide upon the measures, which his hon. and learned friend proposed for their adoption.

Mr. Herbert said a few words in support of the motion.

The *Solicitor-General* thought that a question involving not only the lives of many individuals, but the rights and properties of all his Majesty's subjects, ought to be considered with the most deliberate attention. His hon. and learned friend might have alluded to him, when he adverted to those who were friendly to existing systems, and adverse to innovations. He was ready to admit, that he was attached to the existing system of law, and extremely jealous in his views of any new theories. Whether the doctrines were derived from Smith, or from Paley, he was not disposed to give up practical benefits for plausible advantages. He considered the proposition as calculated not for its particular object, but to cast discredit and odium on the whole body of the criminal law. The argument of his hon. and learned friend went to cut up by the root all discretion in the judges, because it went to confine that discretion within certain limits, at the same time that it professed to extend the discretion of the jury.

Mr. W. Smith did not think any large portion of the hon. and learned gent.'s speech relevant to the question. He contended, that his hon. and learned friend, so far from trusting to theory, had confined his statements and reasonings to facts; and that what the hon. and learned member had attributed to theory was only an inference from facts. His hon. friend had never had an idea of giving way to wild, extravagant, and visionary schemes of theoretical perfection, in the motion he had made, but had founded both his reasoning and proposition on the evidence of facts. The whole foundation of the mo-

tion of his hon. and learned friend, rested upon the inconvenience of the present practice. He did not mean to make any charge against the learned gent. (the *Solicitor-General*) but he was of opinion, that the whole of his argument went against any amelioration whatever.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* defended the principles and arguments laid down by his hon. and learned friend (the *Solicitor-General*.) He could not concur in the views of his hon. and learned friend the mover. If a discretion were to be left in any quarter, he did not know where it could more safely be vested than with the judges. He admitted that what had been stated by his learned friend, formed a fair case for the consideration of the House. And, though he should not oppose the motion, he would not pledge himself in either way as to his future opinion upon the measure.

Sir S. Romilly, in a brief reply in which he did not feel it necessary to touch upon any argument against his motion, complained of the misrepresentations of his sentiments which had proceeded from a right hon. gent. not then in his place, (Mr. Windham). He had never abused the doctrines of Dr. Paley, but on the contrary had stated, that the excellence of his works had given credit to, and caused mischievous effects to be produced by such errors as he had fallen into. The hon. and learned gent. then took notice of the various arguments urged against his motion, and stated that this was only one of the measures which he meant to bring forward for the improvement of the criminal law.

Lord G. Grenville supported the motion.

The question was then put, and leave given to bring in the bill.

#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, February 12.

[ABOLITION OF SLAVE TRADE.] Lord Holland remarked, that it was now about three years since their lordships, having abolished the disgraceful African slave trade, carried up an address to his Majesty, beseeching his Majesty to use such measures, in his wisdom, as might conduce to the abolition of that traffic on the part of those powers in amity with his Majesty. He particularly alluded to America, and to Spain and Portugal. The first of these powers, from



the circumstance of the treaty negotiated with her by the noble lord (Auckland) and himself, not having proved permanent, and from the state of intercourse since that time, was not certainly placed in a situation in which much could be expected to be done with her by us on such a subject. But Portugal and Spain were situated differently, and we had possessed all the means of friendly communication and persuasion with those powers. He was therefore extremely desirous of knowing explicitly what steps had been taken in furtherance of the meaning and spirit of that Address.

The Earl of *Liverpool* assured their lordships that he felt every desire to furnish every possible information respecting the question put by the noble lord. He might take it upon him to say, that in pursuance of the directions of parliament his Majesty's ministers at the different courts in amity with his Majesty, had been instructed to make representations on this head to the courts at which they respectively resided; that such representations had been made to the government of the United States; and also to that of Spain and of Portugal, or rather of the Brazils; but that these countries were now differently situated, both with regard to Great Britain and with relation to one another from the circumstances in which they were placed when the representation had first been made. Our relations were not now on a footing with America, to allow us immediately to recommend or follow up that sort of arrangement. The situation of Spain and of Portugal were also very different: and in the present situation of both, it could not be expected that any thing definitive could be ultimately arranged. At the same time he might assure the noble lord, that the proper instructions to that effect had been given to the British minister at the Brazils, and to the minister in Spain, as far as that country, under its present relations with its colonies, could be able to examine and decide the question.

Lord *Holland* said, that the answer was, to him, quite unsatisfactory. The object of the Address was not, he reminded noble lords, the negotiating with foreign powers to create for us every facility for our abolition of this disgraceful and inhuman traffic, but the persuading of other powers, our friends and allies, to follow the glorious example we had set them, and co-operate with us in putting an end

to it altogether. He was most anxious to know what had been done since. If the object of that Address had not been attended to, it might become his duty to move a censure on those men who had neglected it. He concluded by giving notice of a motion on the subject for Thursday se'nnight.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday, February 12.*

[EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.] Mr. *Hutchinson* rose to move for the production of some documents respecting the state of Antwerp, previously to the sailing of the late Expedition to the Scheldt. He observed, that it appeared from the letter of the noble commander in chief on that Expedition, dated on the 29th of August, that the ulterior objects of the Expedition were totally impracticable, because so formidable was the defensive state of Antwerp, that it would be in vain to attempt its reduction without a regular siege. Now, as this was the fact, he conceived it quite impossible that his Majesty's ministers must not have been most grossly ignorant of that which it was their duty to have perfectly known before they dispatched the Expedition, with such instructions to the commander-in-chief as the noble lord received at his departure. He could not conceive, that, if ministers were really informed of the formidable state of Antwerp, they would have been rash and precipitate enough to have sent the Expedition, under such instructions, for its reduction. But whatever may have been their want of information in other respects, they surely must have been furnished with some plan of the state of the place. They could not plead, in excuse for the failure of their Expedition, their own ignorance that Antwerp was fortified: and if they did know, that it was in a complete state of defence, how could they exculpate themselves for so rash a proceeding as that of detaching so large a portion of the public force, for objects which they must have known to be utterly hopeless, and which fact was made evident to the commander in chief, very shortly after his arrival in the Scheldt. He was aware, that ministers might object to the production of those documents for which he should now move, lest their publicity might give improper information to the enemy; but he could not conceive that any document

on the subject, which could now be laid before that House, could tell the enemy more than they knew already. What he wished to ask of ministers was, the production of any plan or plans they had received shewing the state of Antwerp and Forts Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, with the condition and extent of their respective fortifications, and the substance of such information otherwise, as they had received on the subject, previously to the sailing of the Expedition.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* opposed the motion as premature and unnecessary in the present stage of the business. The House had already decided, that all documents of a secret nature should be referred to the consideration of a secret committee already appointed, and whose duty it would be to report such matters as they judged fit to be made public. If, when that Committee should make their report, the House should deem further information necessary, they might call on their Committee to make a more detailed report, and move for any further documents they might judge necessary. He concluded by moving the previous question.

Sir *J. Newport* said, there would be something in the objection, if his hon. friend had called for the channels through which ministers had got their information. But this had been distinctly disclaimed. Nothing was called for but the information itself, and therefore the argument was entirely inapplicable.

Mr. *Yorke* did not know whether there were a plan or not. Perhaps there were none, except the old plans which might be had in the shops. But the whole subject was before the secret committee, which would report as soon as possible. The motion therefore he thought premature and unnecessary, and a sort of impeachment of the secret Committee.

Mr. *Whitbread* said that the right hon. gent. (Mr. *Yorke*) seemed to shake his head when a plan was mentioned; and if he could draw any inference from this gesture it seemed to imply that ministers had no plan: and, indeed, the right hon. gent. referred members to the shops for plans accessible to any body. He himself believed, that ministers really had no plan: but they did not chuse to acknowledge a fact that must tend directly to their own inculpation.

Mr. *Hutchinson* pledged himself to prove that ministers, in sending off the Expedition, had acted under the grossest igno-

rance of the state and strength of Antwerp.

Lord *Porchester* wished that the documents moved for should be laid upon the table, in the first instance; and if it should appear they were of a secret nature, they should be sealed up, and sent to the secret Committee. He was, however, less anxious about the result of the motion, than surprised at the resistance given to it by the right hon. gent.; as he had no doubt the information required must be ultimately given.

Mr. *Windham* asked, whether it could be a reflection on the secret Committee to call for information which was not secret.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* would admit that, unless the information should come out in the report of the secret Committee, or in some other way, the fair inference would be that ministers had none—as they would have failed to produce it in their own defence.

After a few words from Mr. *Giles*, the previous question was carried without a division.

[**ABOLITION OF SINECURE PLACES.**] Mr. *Fuller* rose to make his promised motion on this subject. He said, that in order to make the House acquainted with the nature of those sinecures which he wished to be abolished, it was impossible to do better than to read a passage from the writings of one of the most illustrious men that ever England produced—he meant lord *Hale*, in his treatise on the amendment of the laws.—That great judge says:—"There are at this day in the *Exchequer* many great officers, that receive the profit and fees of their office, and either do not at all attend it, or know not what belongs to it, but only, perchance, once a term sit with some formality in their gowns, but never put their hands to any business of their offices, nor indeed know not how. For instance, the King's remembrancer, the receiver and remembrancer of the first fruits, the usher of the *Exchequer*, the chief marshal of the *Exchequer*, the chamberlains of the *Exchequer*, the chief clerk of the Pipe, the controller of the Pipe, and some of the auditors that I could name. These, and some other nominal officers, are great men, enjoy their pleasures, understand not, or attend not to their offices, but dispatch all by deputies; and by this means an unnecessary charge is drawn upon the King and his people; for the chief officer hath the profit, and the deputy he hath some, or else he could not live. If these

officers are not necessary, why are they continued? If they are, why should they not be executed at the charge only which accrues from the deputy, and the benefit of the nominal officer, who doth nothing, be retrenched as a needless charge?" And again, "It is the dearest gratification of a courtier or servant that can be imagined, and of the greatest detriment to the King, when an office concerning the revenue is made the reward of the man's service, that knows not how to use it. It were more profit to the King to bestow a pension to the value of the office to such a person; and when he hath done, to bestow the office freely upon an honest man, that knows how to use it. It is true, I know many offices are filled already in this kind, and reversions upon reversions granted; and if an act to remedy it for the future only were to make a provision to begin the next age, it were worth a present provision and on inspection to be made at present, and resumption by act of Parliament to remedy it, with allotment of some moderate pensions to those that would be removed upon this account; and I believe the King nor people could be no losers by it."—It was hardly possible for him to add much to these very pregnant and pointed words of the great lord Hale, it was obvious from the passages he had read, that that great man had not only the idea of abolishing the places alluded to, but of doing so immediately. That however, was not his intention; but if it were, nothing called for an immediate abolition more strongly than the recollection that the emoluments of most of these places, which are said to be given to persons as a remuneration from the public, are by no means so disposed of, and are generally derived from the individual suitors in the courts of law, and by that means make the remedy at law still more expensive and enormous to the subject. Many of these sinecure offices are held here, while they in reality exist in the West Indies or elsewhere, so that the planter who had not been able of late years to make two per cent. of his capital, is obliged to pay additional fees in a court of justice. The planter was called upon to pay fees out of his gainings or rather his losings, to these sinecure holders at home. It would not be imagined he hoped by any one that this was meant by him as an attack upon the power and influence of the crown. No, he was glad to see the

influence of the crown increasing in proportion as the national wealth of the country increased, when of course its morals got worse; but this was sufficiently done by the immense collection of our revenue. His attack was upon those avaricious members of the aristocracy who think it their duty to lay hold of these sinecure places, in order to save them the expence of providing for their younger children, by paying them large sums out of the pockets and the sufferings of individuals, a thing neither done nor thought of, he believed, by any other class of his Majesty's subjects whatever. The sum total of these places, if he were not wrong in his calculation, amounted to 355,612*l.* 2*s.* 7*d.* so that if 55,000*l.* speaking in round numbers, were to be allotted to the payment of those places which there is a necessity of preserving, the public would, after the lives of the present possessors, be a gainer of 300,000*l.* He thought this measure would, instead of lessening the influence of the crown, give it still more strength, as it would enable it to reward those who really deserved rewards, instead of paying those who are idle. It was to the manly virtues of our gracious Sovereign, to the courage and skill of lord Nelson, and to the divine mind of Mr. Pitt, that, in his opinion, we owed our present exalted character as a nation; and he should be sorry to see his benevolent Sovereign, perhaps, compelled in his old age, to do what sir Robert Walpole was said in his last moments to have desired his physician to do for him; that is, to turn his head to the wall, that he might no longer look at the villanies, or the base political ingratitude of those he had formerly served, and that he might hide from his view the iniquity that prevailed. The honourable member concluded with moving, "That leave be given to bring in a bill to abolish all sinecure places, and to reduce the exorbitant emoluments arising out of others, to a standard equal to the services performed, after the lives of the present possessors."—On the question being put,

Mr. *H. Thornton* said he would not oppose the motion, but he thought it would have been better if the hon. gent. had deferred it till the report of the committee of Finance should enable the House to come to some decision upon the question. There were various considerations connected with the case, which should be attended to, before any final determination could be had upon

the subject. It would not only be necessary to consider what sinecures should be abolished, but also what places executed by deputy should be regulated, as well as what increase of salary should be given to the deputies upon whom the duties of the office would fall. Upon all these grounds, he was of an opinion that it would be better for the hon. gent. to put off his motion to some future day.

The Hon. Mr. *Ward*, as this was a question which had been frequently under the consideration of the House, did not think a bare vote sufficient for him; and therefore felt it necessary to state the ground upon which he was induced to support the motion of the hon. gent. But at the same time that he supported this motion, he could not subscribe to the doctrine, as, a plain self-evident truth, that all sinecure offices ought to be abolished. If the measure had been presented to him on any such general grounds, in spite of all the unpopularity which might attach to his conduct, he should feel it his duty to oppose it; but in the present case, the ground upon which he supported the hon. gent.'s motion, arose out of the exception which had been made by that hon. gent., namely, the enormous increase of the influence of the crown. It was now nearly 30 years since the celebrated Resolutions, proposed by Mr. Dunning, had been agreed to by that House, viz. "That the influence of the crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished." He begged gentlemen would bear in mind, that since that period the public establishments had been trebled; the amount of taxes augmented in the highest degree; that the influence of the crown had risen as the country had declined, that it grew with its decay, and strengthened with its weakness; that there was not a family in the whole nation that was not suffering under the consequences of the calamities which had resulted from the system that had been pursued; nay, he should add, that there was not an individual in the country, who was not alive to the mischiefs necessarily arising from having the administration of the government committed to such incapable men, who pursued a course of conduct equally inconsistent with common principles and common sense.—No man could be more attached than he was to the monarchical part of the constitution, nor more decidedly adverse to revolutionary doctrines; and in wishing to diminish the

number of sinecure places, his object was to strengthen the crown, by relieving the burthens of the people. Some check must be put to this kind of influence, not only for the sake of the people, but for the sake of the crown itself. It was because he wished to see the safety of the crown ensured that he wished to see it made somewhat less lofty. It was his wish to see it resting upon the broadest basis. He had but one word more to add on the subject, and that was, that infinitely more advantage than could be expected from the abolition of sinecure places, would be derived from the reform of the great branches of the administration; such reform as had been pointed out by the finance committee. Another source of great public advantage would be found in a total change of the mode of conducting the war. Unless ministers understood how to effect that change, it was in vain to teach them any other lesson. We had wasted as much money, during last year, in the late disastrous expeditions, as would purchase the fee simple of all the sinecure offices that exist. What was the use of their labour if it were only to enable the administration of the country to carry on such expeditions as those to Walcheren and Spain? Expeditions which brought destruction upon British soldiers, and proved a disgrace to the British name. There was no article of expence so great as an obstinate and weak, but projecting ministry. Such being his sentiments, he should conclude with saying, that the hon. gent. who had brought forward this motion, would contribute much more to economy by giving one single vote against the authors of such accumulated calamities, than by making motions of this kind, which would be rejected even by the very persons, whom, on other occasions, he contributed to save.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* observed, that the feeling which seemed to be uppermost in the mind of the hon. gent. was, that whatever might be the subject under consideration, a charge was, at all events, to be brought against government. Whether the question was one for reform, economy, or upon any subject of general policy, the hon. gentlemen opposite uniformly took occasion to bring complaints against the conduct of the government; and to urge, that if talents, ability, and integrity were necessary for the conduct of affairs, they were only to be found on their side of the House. The hon. gentle-

men opposite well knew, that they and their party possessed a much larger proportion of the offices to which the motion applied, than the gentlemen on his side; and he would ask them, whether it was fair, just, or honest in them, to make the possession of such places the ground of charge against his Majesty's present servants? For himself, he should oppose the motion, but upon a different ground from that stated by the hon. gent., who had taken such a view of it only as would lead to a change of government, in which he should justly be destined to bear so conspicuous a part. The Committee of Finance had reported upon the subject of sinecures, that if they were to be abolished, an equivalent should be provided in some other way. And as to the observation of the hon. gent. respecting the great increase of the influence of the crown, he was ready to deny the fact. Since the period when that House had agreed to the proposition of Mr. Dunning, all Mr. Burke's measures of reform had taken place. Besides, in the proportion in which the influence of the crown had increased, in consequence of the augmented revenue and expenditure of the country, the means and wealth of its population had kept constantly progressive, and formed a balance for any accession to the influence of the crown. He looked upon the motion before the House to be premature; but was of opinion, that whether the Expeditions alluded to by the hon. member had been successful or unsuccessful, or whatever might have been the expences attending them, such topics were wholly unconnected with the question before the House.

The Hon. Mr. Lamb charged the right hon. gent. with having misrepresented what had fallen from his hon. friend. His hon. friend had not stated that if the House were to look for a constellation of talents, or an aggregate of integrity, they should only look to the side of the House on which he sat, or to the hon. gentlemen with whom he acted. His hon. friend had only said, that if they were inclined to get rid of the greatest imbecility of counsels, of the wildest plans, and feeblest execution of them, which had ever disgraced any ministers, they should get rid of the gentlemen opposite. He agreed however, with the right hon. gent. that it would have been better if the hon. gent. who brought forward the motion, had waited till the Finance Committee had made its

report upon the subject; but still he should vote for the motion. It was his impression, that much detriment would result to the public interests, if there existed no means of conferring rewards for distinguished public services. He was not disposed invidiously to go through the list of sinecure placemen, but must observe, that there were many names amongst them of persons, who either in person, or whose immediate ancestors, had rendered important services to the state. The right hon. gent. however, had said, that a majority of such offices were in possession of persons connected with the side of the House from which he spoke. He could not deny, that the list of those holding sinecure places presented the spectacle of some persons possessing great and opulent private fortunes, and deriving considerable emoluments from the public through such offices. He must, however, contend that the increase of private wealth would not have the effect of diminishing the influence of the crown, and that such a measure as that under consideration, was necessary for that purpose; because that would favour the impression that no such thing was to be expected as gratuitous service from any description of public men. The great objection which he had to Sinecure Offices was, that they had a tendency to introduce into that House a set of men, who could not be expected to give an unbiassed suffrage upon any discussion, and who would at all times be ready to sell their votes for their offices. He objected to these offices, as not only affording means of support to a venal administration, but also as giving birth and strength to a factious opposition to government; when those who vote and are numbered in the day of battle, think they have reason to complain if they happen to be overlooked in the distribution of the spoil. Upon all these grounds he should vote for the motion.

Mr. Creevey had wished to address the House, immediately after the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In opposition to the statement of that right hon. gent. that the influence of the crown had not increased, he was prepared to contend, that it had increased to an alarming extent. Had not colony been added to colony, and influence risen with augmented patronage in a progressive proportion, since the memorable proposition of Mr. Dunning? Had not the crown, since that period, divided the enormous patronage

of India with the East India Company? Had not the Droits of Admiralty, within a short period, amounted to 8 million, of which no more than 2 million had been applied to the public service, with the exception of 26,000*l.* which had been given to sir Home Popham, a member of that House? Had not the bank of England been placed at the mercy of the crown, and its payments in cash been restricted, so much to its profit, and to the public detriment? And was the House, then, to be told, that the influence of the crown had not greatly increased? Could they forget the case of Mr. Steele? Could they be insensible to the fact that the present Treasurer of the Navy (Mr. Rose); that the hon. Mr. Villiers; that Mr. Hunt, had sinecure places? These were cases, which, in his opinion, ought not to be placed without the reach of the authority of that House. It really appeared to him, according to the course in which things had proceeded lately, to be a matter of indifference, whether public officers violated, or obeyed the laws. They seemed to be equally sheltered in impunity, and could, upon detection, laugh in the faces of the members of that House. Could any man get up in that House, and assert that to lord Melville, who had lately been even a candidate for office, sinecure emoluments of various descriptions, amounting in the whole to 7,000*l.* per annum, independent of his allowance from the East India Company, ought to be granted? Could any gentleman get up in his place and say, that any such office to the amount of 1,700*l.* per annum, should be conferred on Mr. Steele? The House should never forget that the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his colleagues, were at present on their trial, for having exposed our brave army to the greatest calamities that could befall a military force. What security had that House that the right hon. gent. would not, pending this trial, take to himself, or bestow upon some of his connections, some sinecure office behind their backs? He had seen a correspondence between that right hon. gent. and lord Melville, in which that right hon. gent. had stated, that out of deference to popular prejudices he could not bring that noble lord into office, but would advise his Majesty to confer upon him a signal mark of his favour, by exalting him to a higher rank in the peerage. This was a subject upon which that House was bound to exercise its constitutional

controul. The hon. member then adverted to the influence derived through the East India Company; and declared his intention, upon all the grounds he had stated, to vote for the motion.

Mr. *R. Dundas* animadverted upon the manner in which the hon. gent. had spoken of lord Melville in the course of his speech. He did not conceive that that hon. gent. was qualified to judge of the public services of that individual, who fully merited all the gratitude, as he did all the rewards, his country had bestowed upon him. He could not answer as to any feelings entertained in the public mind; but he was well convinced there was a general sense of public justice in the British nation, that would not bear any man's character to be traduced who had been acquitted by his peers. He spoke strongly against the motion.

Lord *A. Hamilton* said it was obvious to any man who cast his eyes over the list of sinecures, that these sinecures were given to lord Melville when in the receipt of a very considerable annual income from the places he actually held. For his own part, he was glad to see there was a man in the House who had the courage and the honesty to advert to the case and the circumstances of that noble lord. He had no hostility to his lordship, but spoke as he ever should speak merely from feelings of public duty. He should be as glad to see members on his side of the House cleared of such imputations as those on the other. The right hon. gent. had alluded to the Report of the Finance Committee, and from that Report, among other reasons, thought the motion unnecessary; but had not he himself brought a message to that House only a few days ago, in direct violation of what he had stated? If there were services to be rewarded, let the sinecures be applied to that purpose. It was the violation of this principle the Report complained of, and with that Report before the House, of which the right hon. gent. pretended to approve, he had thus openly acted in hostility to it. He was afraid those sinecures were always given for political services, and not reserved for those fair honest and open services which the country could approve. He should do every thing in his power to have them abolished, and would therefore vote for the motion.

Mr. *Banks* was proceeding to state that if the hon. gent. was really sincere in his desire to promote the object of his motion,

he would press upon him the necessity of not bringing the measure forward now, when he was interrupted by

Mr. Fuller, who spoke to order.—He appealed to the chair, if any hon. member had a right to suppose from any thing he had said that he was not sincere.

The Speaker interfered, and assured the hon. gent. he was mistaken.

Mr. Bankes said, he had never entertained the smallest idea that the hon. gent. was not sincere in his object; but the more sincere he was the more he would wish him at that moment not to press his motion. If he did, it would certainly do more harm than good. In times like the present, it was necessary to make retrenchments, and particularly in sinecure offices; but it would be impossible to do it in the way proposed by the motion of the hon. gent. If the bill should be brought in, the House must in the Committee go into the nature and detail of all sinecure offices, which would render it impossible to get through it in the present session. If the House determined to take up the measure, as he hoped it would, it should be by resolutions, laying down the principles, on which it was deemed necessary, in a Committee. Some matters of a similar nature were to be brought forward very soon in consequence of the third Report on the Public Expenditure; and he thought this subject of sinecure offices would come very properly within the meaning and intention of what was in the contemplation of the Committee. He was sensible that no object could be more important than for the House to do something effectual towards abolishing sinecures, which were generally given for ministerial support, and not for reward of laborious or meritorious services. The mode of rewarding by pensions was on every account much better, because they could be given at the moment services were performed; but offices might not be vacant at the time; so that merit must, in many cases, go a long time unrewarded; and perhaps when the office did become vacant, it was given to some one who had never done any service to the country. In adverting to the influence of the crown, he allowed that rewards for public services could lay so properly nowhere else—the crown must be the fountain of honour: the constitution would be vicious, if it dissented from it; but then offices should not be given merely to increase the influence of the crown, which he feared they

very often were. If from the particular circumstances of the times, that influence had considerably increased, it ought to be reduced; and to say that the influence of the crown had not, of late years, been greatly extended, was most absurd and futile. With such an immense increase of revenue, it must be the case; and if it had so increased, the House must endeavour to counteract its effects; and he hoped the House would use those endeavours in the present session. If it should be found that any of those sinecures must remain, they should take care that they should be employed in reward of honourable services. He concluded by recommending it to the hon. gent. to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Whitbread said he could not content himself with giving a silent vote on the present question. He would not oppose any proposition of this nature, but he feared the present motion would not attain the end proposed by the hon. mover. He accused the right hon. gent. opposite of having misrepresented what had been said by his hon. friend (Mr. Ward) on the subject of sinecure places. He was an enemy to sinecures chiefly from the manner in which they were disposed of. Were they employed as the means of rewarding distinguished public services only they could produce no mischief, and would be only another name for pensions. But this was not the case. He adverted to the case of lord Nelson, and said, that at the time he so gloriously fell in the arms of victory, the place of the Cinque ports very soon after became vacant. This was a noble opportunity of worthily bestowing a sinecure place of the first magnitude, by making that perpetual in the family of that gallant officer. What, on the contrary, had become of it? Why, it was given to lord Liverpool, for the eminent services he had performed during a short administration. Perhaps we should soon have another instance of the right hon. gent.'s liberality in rewarding public services. The right hon. gent. (Mr. Dundas) had misunderstood what had been said by his hon. friend relative to lord Melville. He had not cast the smallest reflection on that noble lord. His hon. friend had stated that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had written a letter to lord Melville, extracts of which had appeared in the papers, in which he lamented that he could not offer him a place in the administration; but he offered him one of the highest honours the crown could bestow, an advance in the

peerage; and it was on that act of the right hon. gent. his hon. friend had commented. The right hon. gent. had offered places, too, and honours to many others; but he could not prevail on any one to accept them. The right hon. gent. had said, that those on his side of the House, envied him his situation. He (Mr. W.) did not believe any of them would change with him. Indeed, he only held his situation because no body else would take it. God help him, and all his colleagues with their situations!—and God help the country, which had suffered so much from their being in those situations! He owned, that he and his hon. friends had always avowed they wanted to get rid of the present administration. He believed the whole kingdom wanted to get rid of them. If they wanted to get rid of impotence; if they wanted to get rid of intolerance; if they wanted to get rid of religious bigotry, that had endeavoured to set the nation in a flame; if they wanted to get rid of those, who would prescribe the limits within which they would go into retrenchment, then they must get rid of the right hon. gent. and his colleagues. But who would accept their places? He knew of no candidate. He was no candidate himself, and he had heard of none for the office. The right hon. secretary (Mr. Ryder) by the side of the right hon. gent. would not have been in that situation, if any other person would have accepted it; the other hon. secretary (Mr. Wharton) near him would not have been in that situation which he now held, if any body else would have accepted it; and he asked, if there was not now a vacancy to fill up in the board of controul, which had been allotted and offered to a noble lord who had refused to accept it. The right hon. gent. talked of ministers being the defenders of the crown, but he denied their title to that character; they ought rather to be called the tools of the crown instead of its defenders, when, in defiance of repeated majorities in that House—in defiance of the contempt of the whole nation, they still continued in administration. He then adverted to the bill which had lately passed the House respecting Reversions, and said, he verily believed the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have opposed that bill, and endeavoured to have thrown it out, if he had dared to venture to come to a vote. He commented with considerable severity on the use that had been made of sinecure

places, and asked if another sinecure place was to be given to a public accountant to enable him to vacate his seat, that he might escape before the House could lay hold of him. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, the influence of the crown had not increased since the year 1780. He was astonished to hear such language: let the House but look at the immense increase of the revenue, and they would find the increase of influence was such, that it pervaded every part, every corner of the kingdom, and branched out into so many channels, that they would scarcely meet a family, even of the highest classes, as well as others, that was not most materially influenced by it. He thought he could not vote against the proposition if it was to come to a vote, but he hoped the hon. gent. would agree to withdraw it.

Mr. Fuller said, that if either of the hon. gentlemen would point out a mode by which the public and himself might be satisfied that the business was not to be abandoned, but would be brought forward at some time not far distant, he would withdraw his motion; if not, he should now persevere in it, though not a man in the House were to divide with him. A right hon. gent. of great talents, told the House, that they should all be of some party; he supposed he meant we should all wear some distinguishing colour. Was Cicero, however, of any party? Were the Scipios of any party? No, they stood for the good of their country. If the hon. gent. would pledge himself seriously to bring the business forward at some early day, he would consent to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Bankes said, he would undertake, at a very early period, to bring the matter before the House.

Mr. Fuller asked, when?

Mr. Bankes replied, on Thursday.

Mr. Fuller then, with the leave of the House, withdrew his motion.

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#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday, February 13.*

[*DISTILLERIES.*]—On the motion of Mr. Rose, the Act prohibiting the use of Corn in Distilleries, was read, and the right hon. gent. moved, "That the House should go into a Committee to consider the same."

Mr. Parnell could not suffer this motion to pass without expressing his disapprobation.



tion of the mode of proceeding adopted by the right hon. gent. It was most extraordinary that he should submit such a motion to the House, without saying a single word to explain the grounds on which he considered it right for the House to sanction it; because he could not have brought forward a measure more important than this to the public interest. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1808, called on the House to prohibit the distilling from grain, he thought it necessary to institute a previous enquiry by a Select Committee, and on the report of that Committee, and what he considered a proof of a deficient crop, he urged the prohibition of the distilling from grain.—This is the course that ought now to be pursued, because the continuance of the prohibition can only be justified by the proof of a scarcity actually existing, and of there being good reasons to apprehend one. Such was the doctrine formerly of the right hon. gentlemen themselves; and therefore he would move an amendment to the motion of the right hon. gent. to the effect of having a Select Committee appointed, to enquire whether there did exist any good grounds for continuing the prohibition. The silence of the right hon. gent. had left it a matter of conjecture on what principle he founded his motion. Was it that the state of things in 1810 was similar to that of 1808? Then a scarcity did exist in parts of Scotland and in the north of Ireland; the crop in England was deficient, and the supply from foreign countries was cut off by the Decrees of Buonaparté. But now grain was in great plenty in Scotland—the crop of potatoes there had been particularly abundant. In Ireland there was a redundant stock of grain, and corn was importing in large quantities into England from France. But there was now no good reason ever to look abroad for a supply of grain. The imports from Ireland since the trade was made free, prove this fact. In the two last years, 1,200,000 quarters of grain have been imported, a larger quantity than was annually imported from abroad before the trade was free. And if the impolitic measure of stopping the distilleries had never taken place, by this time the gains of the farmers of Ireland, would have induced them to make such exertions in extending tillage, that no necessity could have now existed for importing corn. The prices besides proved that there was no scarcity nor reason to appre-

hend one. But if the right hon. gent. shall argue, that the prices of grain now compared with what they were in former periods, prove a scarcity, then he will argue most falsely, because the rise in price is not a real one, but apparent only, inasmuch as the bank paper, in which these prices are calculated, is greatly depreciated. But, besides these considerations, before the House acceded to the motion of the right hon. gent. it ought to attend to those principles of policy which had been laid down by the wisest men. They said, that the complete freedom of the corn trade was the only prevention of the miseries of famine, and that upon no account ought the agriculture of the country to be interfered with—and their doctrine was founded on this circumstance, that without security was given to the farmer, that he should reap the fair reward of his labour and capital, those great exertions for supplying food would never be made, that were absolutely necessary for the welfare of the people. If there was any ground now for complaining of the stock of grain in the country, it could only be the result of this security having been taken from the farmer in 1808 and 1809, for had the farmers been permitted to derive the full advantage of a free consumption of grain in these three years, they would have been induced to sow so largely, that there can be no doubt the last crop would have been infinitely more abundant than it has proved to be.—In regard to Ireland, continued Mr. Parnell, though the report may prove correct, that the ministers mean to admit the distillation of corn there, it will be taking a narrow view of the subject to consider this concession as sufficient to secure the interests of Ireland; because the prohibition here will contribute to diminish the demand for Irish oats and barley; and it will again be pleaded, that the Irish spirits must be prohibited from being exported to Britain, which measure, the hon. member said he would always oppose as a violation of the Act of Union, and which would for ever be taken for a precedent, whenever English and Irish interests clashed together. For these reasons it was incumbent on the Irish members, if they wished to protect the interests of Ireland, to oppose the prohibition, even if only proposed to be adopted for Great Britain, and not to suffer the motion of the right hon. gent. to pass. If the right hon. gent. intended the prohibition as a relief for any distresses experi-

enced in the colonies, he would have as little grounds for pressing it as he had on a plea of scarcity; for sugar, which in 1808 was 32s. per cwt. was now 56s. Besides, it was most impolitic to look for relief by a measure which was to interfere so injuriously with the agricultural interests of the country. If distress existed, let the cause of it be ascertained and removed. The case made out was, that there was not a sufficient demand to take off the produce of the colonies, and the cause of this the Committee shewed to be the colonial monopoly, and various acts of Parliament restricting the colonial trade. Common sense then would point out the abolishing of this monopoly, or the repeal of those laws, as not only a remedy, but a lasting one; whereas, the distilling of sugar can at best afford a very limited and temporary degree of relief. For these several reasons, and having the example of the right hon. gent. to go by, he should move, That a Select Committee be appointed to enquire into the expediency of continuing the prohibition of distilling from grain.

Mr. *Rose* thought going into a Committee of the whole House, the most expedient way for considering the question. Had that motion been carried, he would not have found it necessary to go any great length into the principle of the measure, which he considered as fully established the last session. The same causes existed now. The price of grain was higher than when the Act was passed, which was proved by the returns before the House. The rise of the price of bullion could by no means balance this increase of price, to which it bore no proportion. He could see no occasion for a Committee to inquire into the scarcity of provisions; the best proof of the abundance of the article, was the price of it. With respect to the hon. gent.'s assertion of the abundant crops in Scotland, he would only say, that an hon. member from that country, now beside him, complained very much of the great damage that had been done to it before it was got in. As to Ireland, it certainly was not his intention to extend the prohibition to that country, for there were many reasons which the hon. gent. had not contemplated. From the superabundance of the crop, the prohibition was unnecessary, and would be injurious. Another reason was, that the revenue was not easily collected in that country. The hon. gent. had exclaimed against the prohibition of spirit

intercourse, as contrary to the Union, and not beneficial to Ireland. To this he would say, that it was absolutely necessary while they were allowed to distil from corn, which the other country was not, and that the same prohibition already existed, and was found to benefit and protect Ireland.

Sir *John Newport* thought, that they need go no farther than the Report of the Committee upon the bad consequences of prohibitions, to see the impolicy of resorting to them in the present case. The Committee had expressly stated, that in their opinion they had a tendency to injure the agricultural interests of the country, and that nothing but the strong statements of the West India merchants could induce them to recommend even a temporary adoption. He did not think that they were warranted in continuing the prohibition upon the bare statement of the right hon. gent. It became them particularly to weigh the subject well, as no man could deny that it was an infringement of the Articles of Union. It had been asked, would the distillers of this country submit to the prohibition, without a suspension of the intercourse in the article of spirits, between the two countries? He saw no reason why they should not; he saw no reason why they should object to the performance of the Articles of Union. If this measure was to be persisted in, he considered it so gross an act of injustice towards Ireland, that he should, at a future period, propose a suspension of the intercourse between the two countries, in cotton goods, to continue while the prohibition upon the spirit trade lasted. A prohibition similar to the present was laid on by the former Parliament, but then it was only for a period of six weeks. But the present Parliament continued it without entering into any inquiry as to its necessity. He wished to support the West India trade, but it was not by such little temporary expedients. If this measure was persevered in, he should consider it as a home blow to the agricultural interests of Ireland.

Mr. *Yorke* wished for a Committee, and thought it would appear, that there was no necessity for extending the prohibition to oats.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* thought that when they considered the alarm which was generally spread by the appointment of Committees to enquire into the state of grain, they should be slow to

adopt the amendment. It had been represented as a breach of the Articles of Union; it was not a breach in the spirit, nor, did he believe, in the letter of the Act. The hon. baronet had threatened them with proposing a prohibition upon the cotton trade. Did he think that that would be a benefit to Ireland? If he did, there was yet no analogy between the two cases to justify such a proposition. If the importation of spirits from Ireland was not prohibited, the grain would be sent there from the country, and returned, after distillation, so that the object which government had in view, would be completely defeated.

Mr. *M. Fitzgerald* supported the arguments for a previous inquiry, and contended, that the right hon. gent. who had just sat down, had founded all his reasoning on fallacious assumptions, such as, that the corn trade of the two countries was nearly in the same state; whereas in Ireland that trade was the staple trade of the country, forming the most material part of its exports, and strengthening by its increase that important branch of the empire, whilst this country was obliged to import for its support, diminishing its productions as its importation augmented. If the crop of oats had been adequate, how happened it that the London, Liverpool, and Bristol markets were supplied from Ireland? He trusted that the Irish gentlemen who were interested in the question, would oppose the prohibition of the importation of Irish spirit to this country, as it was contrary to the Articles of the Union. If that House were to adopt such a measure, they would impede an event now in progress, and highly desirable, the supply of British consumption from the Irish soil. It was well known that this country was now importing corn from France, a species of supply which might be cut off at once without notice. The enemy might then refuse to British wants, what he at present conceded to his own convenience. The right hon. gent. strongly enforced the policy of encouraging the agricultural interests of Ireland, with a view to provide an adequate supply for the consumption of this country.

Mr. *Foster* observed, that nothing could be more injurious, than that it should be supposed that a desire for a war of prohibitions existed in either country. He was glad to find that all the gentlemen who had spoken had expressed a desire to sup-

port the agricultural prosperity of Ireland. The last harvest had been abundant, and the potatoe crop, the staple support of the people of Ireland, had never been known so productive, so that a much greater portion of corn could be spared for the distilleries. He denied that the prohibition of the importation of corn spirit from Ireland, at a time when distillation from grain was suspended in this country, was a breach either of the spirit or the letter of the articles of Union. These articles provided for the equality of the commercial intercourse between the two countries, by directing, that, on the introduction of the manufactures of either into the other, that equality should be secured by countervailing duties. How then could countervailing duties be imposed, if no such article was manufactured at the time of the importation? If you prohibit the manufacture in one country, you must, to insure equality, prohibit the importation of the manufactured article from the other.

Mr. *Marryat* exhorted the House to husband the agricultural produce of the empire, lest any scarcity should arise, which might perhaps oblige us to apply to the enemy at once for bread and peace. He would therefore deprecate the idea of having the corn of Ireland consumed in the distilleries. But yet he was desirous to afford every practical encouragement to the agricultural interest of that country. With that view he would recommend, that the importation of all foreign corn should be interdicted, and that the Irish agriculturist should have the monopoly of the English market; and if that were not sufficient he would put a stop to the importation of butter and cheese from Holland, which in fact ought to take place, if we could provide an adequate supply elsewhere, as it formed a material source of gain to the enemy; but still more for the encouragement of the Irish, he would prohibit the importation of hemp and flax from the Baltic. If all these expedients failed, he thought it would be proper to allow the distillation from corn, which some gentlemen required. But he would previously try the expedients he had mentioned, and particularly that with respect to the prohibition of the importation of foreign corn. This, indeed, was a measure which in his judgment could not be too soon resorted to. The benefit which the enemy derived from the present system of licensing the importation of his

grain, was much more, he apprehended, than many gentlemen imagined. It was a fact, that in July last, the farmers of France were so distressed by the low price of grain, that they could not pay their taxes. The price was then so low as 27s. the sack, whilst it was known that the French farmer calculated upon a price of 36s. as a fair return for his expences. Buonaparté being apprized of these circumstances, had no hesitation, of course, in granting licenses for the exportation of that grain, which our government readily granted licenses to import; the consequence of which was the raising of the price of that article in France, by the last accounts, above 50 per cent. beyond the rate in July last. Thus were the French corn growers benefited, while Buonaparté's treasury derived at the rate of 18s. a quarter from the same means. He would then submit it to the serious consideration of the House, whether some measures ought not to be immediately taken to put an end to a practice which so materially served the resources of the enemy. The system of licenses operated, in fact, to counteract the Orders in Council, for it enabled the enemy to export his staple commodities; it enabled him to carry on a most extensive commerce through the medium of nominally neutral ships. In fact, the expence and danger to England from this licensed traffic, was calculated to excite considerable alarm. The freight actually paid within the last year to those ships under neutral colours was, he understood, little short of a million sterling, the number of those ships being 4,000, navigated by 50,000 subjects of Buonaparté. Thus were we rearing seamen for the enemy by a species of traffic, which appeared advantageous to his interests alone. This statement he would leave to the consideration of Parliament and the public, commanding attention as it must, in a peculiar degree, from the nature of the proposition suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—from the means obviously to be derived by the exclusion of foreign corn for the benefit of the Irish agriculturist. He concluded with observing, that he would not object to the House going into the Committee.

Mr. W. Smith did not think that the present prices of grain were sufficient to justify the prohibition. He understood that a great deal of distillation was going forward in the highlands of Scotland, notwithstanding the prohibition.

Mr. C. Hutchinson considered it an infringement of the articles of Union, and said, that the demand for sugar was never greater, nor perhaps so great, as at present. He should therefore support the amendment of his hon. friend.

Lord Binning objected to the amendment. He reminded gentlemen what an interminable question it was in the Committee last year, and warned them against reviving the discussion upon the prohibition, with respect to Ireland.

Mr. Grattan said, that, with every respect for the West India merchants, still he could not think of sacrificing to them the agricultural interests of Ireland. With every respect also for Scotland, he could not think of preventing the exercise of the industry of his own country, for the purpose of supplying Scotland with oats. He could not agree to sacrifice the agricultural interests of Ireland, not merely to the wants of Scotland, but to her imaginary wants. The prohibition should be extended to Ireland, when no scarcity existed.

The gallery being cleared, the House divided, when there appeared

For the Amendment - - - 17

Against it - - - 58

Majority - - - 41

Upon our re-admission to the gallery, we found the House in Committee, and

Mr. Rose on his legs. The right hon. gent. observed upon the statement of Mr. Marryatt relative to the freight and number of the neutrals in our employment, which, in his opinion, was considerably over-rated. As to licences granted to those neutrals, he begged it to be understood, that no neutral had a licence to go into any other port than that into which a British ship would not be admitted; and as to the number of neutrals so licensed, that was owing to the extent of our commerce, which, while it occupied the whole of our shipping, necessarily called for that addition. The right hon. gent. concluded with moving, That the chairman should be directed to move for leave to bring in a Bill to prohibit distillation from grain for a time to be limited.

Mr. Parnell declared, that from the information which he had obtained in Scotland, there was no scarcity whatever existing, or to be apprehended in that country; and why should the agricultural interest of Ireland be sacrificed to provide against imaginary want in Scotland? As to the argument of the right hon. gent.

(Mr. Foster) in favour of the prohibition of the import of Irish spirits into England, that argument could only rest upon the presumption, that Ireland was a foreign country instead of being an integral part of the empire. Would the proposition, he should ask, be endured, that because the manufacturer of a particular article might stop in an English county, in consequence of the local scarcity of that article, a similar manufacturer from another English county should not be admitted?

The question was going to be put, when Lord Primrose and Mr. Boyle suggested the propriety of continuing the restriction of distilling from grain in Ireland, and expressed a hope that the operation of the bill would be made to extend to Ireland.

Mr. Foster said, that in case any such proposition was made, he would endeavour to be in his place, and give it all his opposition. The question was then put and agreed to.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Wednesday, February 14.*

[MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY.] Mr. Manning rose to bring forward his motion, in consequence of the petition he had presented a few days since, praying for a Bill to establish a New Marine Insurance Company. He spoke at considerable length, but in so low a tone, that it was impossible to collect even the substance of his speech with any degree of accuracy. We understood, however, that he made a chronological statement of similar institutions already adopted, from time to time, in this country, and their inadequacy to meet all the objects of commercial men. With respect to the design of the merchants who had signed this petition, any man who read the list must be confident they were not men likely to be actuated by mere views of personal interest; but that they chiefly contemplated the general interests and accommodation of the mercantile world. He then went into a comparative statement of the amount of insurances at the different offices annually, and shewed that in the two now in existence, which offices possessed exclusive privileges, namely, the Royal Exchange and London Assurance, their amount of risk on vessels was so limited, that neither would exceed 10,000*l.* upon any one ship; and that ship-owners, whose vessels greatly exceeded that value, were obliged to run their own risks.

There was another point extremely to be desired by merchants, namely, that they should be always assured of the ability of those who subscribed to policies, fully to meet the risk; a point not easily known by the present mode. Merchants were obliged to apply frequently to a number and variety of underwriters at Lloyd's, upon risks of any large amount; and the consequence often was, a considerable loss to the party so insured; inso-much, that at the peace of Amiens, he knew one gentleman insured for 36,000*l.* who was forced, through the insolvency of several of the underwriters at Lloyd's, to sit down with a loss of one-third of the whole amount insured. A regular company, composed by persons of known respectability, carrying on their business in one house, and under the management of directors, was the kind of establishment most desirable to commercial men. The subscribers to this petition had already subscribed a sum of five millions, which they could increase to any extent required; so that instead of being confined, like the two present companies, exclusively chartered, to a risk of about three millions, or three parts out of one hundred, constituting the total of the insurances of London in each year, the proposed company might insure to any extent required. The establishment he proposed would not injure the interests of any other, for the increased commerce of this country would afford business enough for all; and the establishment might be made to answer, not only for England, but for every nation of the globe, and thus attract a most lucrative branch of business to this country. He trusted the House would see the importance of the proposition. He would not conclude his speech upon the subject in the usual way, by moving for leave to bring in a bill, because he thought it more decorous to consult in the first instance, the deliberative wisdom of a committee of the House, who should inquire fully into the necessity and expediency of the measure, and report their opinion. The hon. member concluded by moving "That a select committee be appointed to take into consideration the act made in the 6th of George the first, for granting exclusive privileges for marine insurances, to the Royal Exchange and London Assurance companies, and also to consider the best means of effecting marine insurances, and report their opinion to the House."

Mr. *Murray* rose, and spoke as follows : Mr. Speaker ; For the better elucidation of the motion now before the House, it will be necessary to state, more particularly than has hitherto been done, the nature and object of the petition with which it is connected, and on which it is founded. This petition is signed by a great number of very respectable individuals in this metropolis, describing themselves as merchants and others having assurances to make, who are desirous of forming themselves into a company, with a capital of five millions, for the purpose of effecting assurances ; and praying that they may be enabled so to do, either by the repeal of the exclusive privileges granted to the two existing companies, by the Act of the 6th Geo. 1, or by being permitted to make such assurances as a company, notwithstanding the said recited Act. Thus the supporters of this petition are in a situation of some embarrassment as well as awkwardness ; for they must first persuade the House that insurance companies, possessing exclusive or particular privileges, are prejudicial to the public interests, in order to induce us to deprive those now existing of their chartered rights ; and then, requesting us to forget all they have said on this subject, they must take up the contrary side of the argument, and persuade us that such companies are advantageous to the public interests, in order to induce us to establish their intended new company on the ruins of the old companies. They endeavour, indeed, to draw a distinction between this new company and the present chartered companies, by declaring that they renounce all pretensions to a charter—that they require no monopoly ; but the explanation they give of their views and objects, by no means accords with these declarations.—Parties who apply for an incorporation can have but two objects in view ; to obtain either exclusive or particular privileges, and to obtain an exemption from responsibility beyond the amount which they engage to invest as a capital in the intended undertaking. The plan of this new company comprises both these objects ; for the petitioners pray that they may have the privilege of doing that, which the law as it now stands prohibits them from doing, effecting marine insurances as a company ; and they farther pray, that they may be exempted from responsibility beyond the amount of their intended capital. Whether these advan-

tages are given them by a charter, or by an act of Parliament, the mode indeed may vary, but the effect will be the same ; and therefore, there is nothing to distinguish this case, from other cases of applications made by individuals for privileges not enjoyed by the community at large. It is obvious that the grant of any such privileges or immunities to any set of men, is an injury to all those by whom they are not enjoyed ; and therefore it is an established principle that they ought never to be granted, but in order to procure some advantage for the public, which cannot be procured by any other means. To use the words of lord Coke, (3rd Inst. 184), “ there must be, *urgens necessitas, et evidens utilitas.*” These pleas have been justly admitted in the case of several corporations lately established, not only in this metropolis, but in the out-ports ; I mean the Dock Companies. The urgent necessity and evident utility, of giving adequate security to the public revenue and to private property, was so strongly felt, that Parliament thought it advisable to encourage these undertakings, by the exclusive privilege of warehousing certain commodities, at certain rates, for a certain period ; but at the same time, with a due regard to the interests of individuals, they indemnified every description of persons who might be deprived of their accustomed occupations and profits by this new change of system. If we try the merits of the petition now before the House, by the principles here laid down, it is impossible that we can accede to it ; for no case has been made out, either of urgent necessity or evident utility. The parties merely propose to do that as a company, for their own emolument, which is already done by individuals ; and this, too, without making any provision to compensate those who would be deprived of their present means of subsistence, by the intended innovation.—It has been urged in favour of the present application, that the preamble of the Act of 6th Geo. 1, by which the two Marine Insurance Companies now existing were established, expresses itself in language favourable to chartered and joint stock companies. If, however, we look into the history of that Act, we shall find that the application of these companies for a charter, was in the first instance rejected : but that the civil list being soon afterwards much in arrear, and the proprietors offering 600,000*l.* to supply this deficiency, the minister of the

day, anxious to provide means for defraying the too lavish expenditure of the court, without imposing new burdens on the people, exerted all his influence in favour of the measure; and that then this Act was carried through the House. Thus the existing companies owe their establishment to a job; and this surely is no very great recommendation to the pretensions of any new companies of a similar description.—Indeed, although the preamble of this Act justifies the establishment of these two companies, in consequence of the numerous failures which had then recently taken place among the underwriters, (a consideration by no means applicable to the present times), yet, in the subsequent clauses, it provides that his Majesty may revoke their charters, if they are found inconvenient or hurtful to the public; enacts, that no other such corporations shall ever be established; and recognizes the general principle, that all joint stock companies “manifestly tend to the common grievance, prejudice, and inconvenience of great numbers of his Majesty’s subjects, in their trade or commerce, and their affairs;” declares them to be public nuisances; and parties engaged in joint stock companies without the sanction of the legislature, are liable to prosecutions under this very Act.—If we refer to other Parliamentary authorities, we shall find that grants of exclusive or particular privileges, have ever been viewed by our ancestors with great jealousy, and have frequently excited their just reprehension. In the reign of queen Elizabeth, the House of Commons voted such grants to be breaches of the privileges of the people; and the Queen, in consequence, annulled the greater number of them, and subjected the rest to the controul of the laws. When she received the thanks of the House for so doing, she gave them in return her “heartly commendations, for having recalled her from an error, pro- ceeding from her ignorance, not her will, and acknowledged that these things would have turned to her disgrace, had not such harpies and horse leeches,” (as the good Queen termed these monopolizers), “been made known and discovered to her, by her faithful Commons.” (Rapin, A.D. 1600.) James I, confined his grants of monopoly to foreign trade only; and Mr. Hume tells us, that “by this enormous grievance the trade of England was reduced to a very low ebb,

“being brought into the hands of a few rapacious engrossers.” At length Parliament interfered again, and an Act was passed in the 21st year of that King’s reign, by which all monopolies were condemned, as contrary to law and the known liberties of the people: an Act, which sir John Sinclair observes, ought for ever to have put an end to so destructive a grievance. Charles I, among other expedients to raise money, resorted to that of granting exclusive and particular privileges; but as soon as Parliament met, they protested against these grants as one of their greatest grievances, and passed a resolution, that all members having a share in them, directly or indirectly, should be incapable of holding a seat in the House. Many in consequence vacated their seats, and those who did not, were expelled. (Rushworth, 4. page 37. Whitelocke, page 38.) This may be no bad lesson to some gentlemen concerned in the present undertaking; for certainly the principle of exclusion may be much more justly applied to those who obtain particular privileges by grants from the crown, than to those who take contracts by public and open biddings, in the disposal of which the crown has no influence whatever. I shall not trespass on the patience of the House, by citing more parliamentary or historical authorities, nor by giving quotations from writers on political economy, all of whom concur in the injustice and impolicy of establishing companies with exclusive or particular privileges; but conclude my observations upon them with the just and emphatic sentiment of Dr. Adam Smith, who says, that “they are nuisances in every respect.”—If I am asked why I, who profess myself inimical to all such companies, object to the appointment of a Select Committee, to consider of the Act of the 6th Geo. 1, by which the exclusive privilege of effecting marine insurances, as companies, was granted to the two companies now existing, I answer, because the limited extent of the influence and interest of these companies, renders them much less exceptionable than this intended New Marine Insurance Company, which, we are told by its advocates, comprises 9-10ths of the whole commercial interest of this metropolis; because I am not so inveterate a system-monger as to wish to subvert old established institutions, although I disapprove of the principles on which they were founded, when experience has shewn

that they are not inconvenient nor hurtful in practice; and because I will not lend myself to the views of those, who, under the specious pretext of redressing existing grievances, would introduce others infinitely more intolerable in their stead; and who are pursuing their own private interests, under the pretence of the public good.—If I am asked why I object to the other part of this motion, the appointment of a Committee to consider of our present means of effecting marine insurances in Great Britain, I answer, because the subject was completely investigated so lately as July, 1806, by the Committee appointed on the Globe Insurance Company's Bill; before whom it was so satisfactorily proved, that our means, both in point of extent and solidity, were completely adequate to every possible occasion, that the parties abandoned their application to Parliament. I am aware that one of the gentlemen who gave the most decided testimony before that Committee, is a subscriber to the petition now before the House, and one of the intended directors of the New Company; but this circumstance does not prove that any change has taken place in his sentiments: it only proves that he has discernment enough to know, that an establishment which may be a very bad thing for the community, may be a very good thing for individuals. I am aware too, that the names of many subscribers to Lloyd's are to be found annexed to this petition; but I know that the greater part of them joined this new company only because they thought it impossible successfully to oppose the powerful interests by which it was supported, and considering the ruin of all individual underwriters as inevitable, were willing to save something out of their own wreck.—In order to put the House in possession of the real merits of this case, it will be necessary to explain the mode in which marine insurances are at present effected in this metropolis. Exclusive of the two chartered companies, there are about 1,500 subscribers to Lloyd's, the greater number of whom daily attend there for the purpose of transacting insurance business. The merchant, when he receives an order to effect insurances from his correspondents abroad, or has occasion to cover property shipped by himself at home, applies to an insurance broker, who transacts the business either with the public companies, or with individual underwriters, according as he finds it most to the ad-

vantage of his employer. The House will see the extent to which competition is carried by this mode of effecting marine insurances. The merchant is aware that his credit with his foreign correspondents depends upon his executing their orders on the best terms possible. The broker is equally aware that his credit with his employer, the merchant, depends upon the same circumstance. The underwriter is also aware, that unless he writes at the very lowest current premium, the brokers, who are in the habit of shewing him their policies, will transfer their accounts to other underwriters; and from this consideration, he frequently accepts a premium which in his best judgment, he considers as inadequate to the risk, rather than lose his connections. Thus competition is carried to the highest possible pitch; and thus has the reputation of this country for effecting marine insurances on the most reasonable terms been so universally established, that orders from every part of the globe are sent here, the property annually insured in this kingdom amounting to nearly two hundred millions, as is proved by the duty paid for stamps upon policies.\*—But, it is contended that greater facility is wanted in effecting insurances, and will be given by the establishment of this new company. A reference to the evidence given before the committee on the Globe Insurance Bill, on this particular point, in July, 1806, completely disproves this assertion;

* Amount of cash received for sea policy stamps, delivered to individuals in the year 1809, from the office in London, .....	£.312,251	3	11
Ditto to the chartered companies, .....	12,577	0	0
	324,828	3	11
Add for the out-ports and Ireland, estimated at one-fourth of the above, .....	81,207	1	0
	£.406,035	4	11
Four-fifths foreign insurance, or £.324,828 duty, at 5s. per cent. will cover property to amount of .....	£.129,931,200	0	0
One-fifth Irish and coasting trade, or £.81,207 duty, at 2s. 6d. per cent. will cover property to amount of.....	64,965,600	0	0
Total amount of property insured in Great Britain in 1809, ... ..	£.194,896,800	0	0



and, since that period, the number of underwriters has increased in a far greater proportion than the extent of business. Indeed, it will at once appear evident, that no such facility is wanting; and that our present means of effecting marine insurances are equal to every possible occasion, from the following statement. The number of subscribers to Lloyd's is about 1500; supposing them to write only 300*l.* each on a policy, the amount would be 450,000*l.*; but many of them are in the habit of writing 1,000*l.*, 2,000*l.* and even 5,000*l.* on a single risk. There can, therefore, be no difficulty in insuring with individual underwriters, a much larger sum than ever was embarked in any one bottom, even without the present public offices, much more without the establishment of any new public offices.—It has also been contended, that greater competition would be excited by the establishment of this new company, and thus the general interests of commerce be benefited. This I deny, on irrefragable evidence—the experience of the past, by which we are best enabled to form a sound judgment of the future. The two public offices already in existence, so far from coming into competition with Lloyd's, in any beneficial way to the general interests of the public, confine themselves to what are called regular risks, in effecting which to any possible extent there is no difficulty whatever; but in what are called cross risks, in those new and perilous modes of carrying on commerce, to which the state of Europe has lately obliged us to resort, the public offices come into no competition with Lloyd's; for they refuse to write them at any premium. During the whole of the last year, they refused to insure vessels trading to or from the Baltic, unless warranted free from capture and seizure in the ports of the enemy, the great risk against which the parties interested wished to be covered: and this branch of commerce, which extended the export of our manufactures and produce to an unprecedented amount, and secured us an abundant supply of naval stores, so indispensably necessary to the support of our maritime greatness, would never have been carried on, (or unless it could have been insured it could not have been carried on,) but for the spirit and enterprise of the underwriters at Lloyd's. Every man there ventured a certain sum upon these risks, such as he could afford to pay in case of loss; and

thus the whole property was covered, and these invaluable national benefits were obtained. The public companies depend upon their regular business, which enables them to pay a very handsome dividend to their proprietors; and if more of these companies were to be established, and more of the regular business were monopolized, individual underwriters would be discouraged from pursuing their avocations, and competition be lessened instead of being increased. It would be absurd to expect any public office to act on any other system; for it is impossible that the acting director or secretary of a public office, should possess the same knowledge, as to the nature and extent of every new description of risk, the same information as to the means by which the decrees of the enemy may be eluded, as 1,500 underwriters, mostly men of commercial habits, and consequently commercial knowledge, daily collected together for the purpose of communicating and receiving intelligence; whose judgments on these subjects are formed and confirmed by constant habits of individual application and mutual discussion, and who concentrate the scattered rays of information, as it were, into one focus at Lloyd's. On this conviction the public offices, very wisely, refuse to undertake what they do not understand; and wholly decline the only species of competition with Lloyd's, which could in the smallest degree conduce to the public advantage.—Another argument urged in favour of establishing this new company is, that greater security is offered to the public by them, than can be given by individual underwriters. It is not necessary for me to undertake to disprove particular instances that may be brought forward of the insolvency of underwriters, or to contend that they are immaculate as a body, either in property or character; but, this I will assert, that a man who suffers by the insolvency of underwriters at Lloyd's, suffers, generally speaking, strange as it may appear, with his own concurrence. A broker will tell his merchant, that he cannot complete his insurance with good men, unless he will give a higher premium. The answer frequently is, you must not give more, for such a house has effected the same risk at the same premium; therefore, get the best names you can; and thus the merchant frequently sets the advantage to be gained by the reduction of premium, against the risk to be run from the want

of solidity in the underwriters. No merchant who offers a fair premium, and whose business is transacted by brokers of respectability, is ever under the necessity of taking a doubtful name on his policy; and I maintain, that Lloyd's offers better security to the assured than can be given by any chartered company. I say so, for this plain reason, that every man at Lloyd's is responsible for his engagements to the last shilling of his fortune, while the members of an incorporated company are responsible only for the amount of the capital originally invested; and the capital of the underwriters at Lloyd's infinitely exceeds that of any chartered company whatever. For instance: the capital of this new company is intended to be five millions, of which only one million, I understand, is to be actually advanced. In point of fact, then, the one million so advanced, is the whole extent of the security offered to the public; for though the original subscribers to this undertaking are men of fortune and able to pay the other four millions in case of need, yet they, from various motives, may be induced to sell out, and may sell to men of straw, mere speculators, who would not be able to pay the other four millions. But giving them the whole advantage of this argument, and taking their capital at five millions, that sum bears no proportion to the aggregate capital of the underwriters at Lloyd's; for I could name fifty out of the 1,500 subscribers to that house, who could pay down these five millions at any time, without the smallest inconvenience, leaving the capital of the other 1,450 subscribers wholly untouched. Events have occurred within these few years, that would have more than swallowed up the capital of this company, and yet have scarcely occasioned the failure of a single individual at Lloyd's; for every prudent underwriter regularly classes all his risks, and proportions the amount he hazards on those of each particular description to his means of payment in case of loss; a precaution which could not possibly be observed in the vast mass of business that would be undertaken by this new company. The events to which I allude, are the detentions and subsequent condemnation of the Dutch ships, in consequence of the hostilities that took place between this country and Holland, in the year 1794; the capture and condemnation of American vessels by France and Spain, in the year 1797, on the plea of their navi-

gating without the role d'équipage required by treaty; and the seizure of all the British ships in the ports of Russia, by the emperor Paul, in the year 1799. Had this intended new company been established previous to either of those periods, comprehending within itself, as the proprietors themselves declare it does, 9-10ths of the commercial interest of this metropolis, and of course doing 9-10ths of the business, and sustaining 9-10ths of the losses, it must have been totally ruined. But, the proprietors, sheltered under that limited responsibility which is the great object of their present application to parliament, would still have continued men of opulence: their carriages would still have rolled along the streets, and have splashed with mire the unfortunate individuals, who had been ruined by their insolvency as a company. When these disasters happened, some underwriters certainly failed; but the number was comparatively small: the blasts that would have torn up this company by the roots, scarcely brought down a leaf from the tree at Lloyd's. Whether, therefore, we consider the amount of the capital employed at Lloyd's, or the subdivision of risks attended to by the individual underwriters there, it is obvious that the public security, so far from being augmented, would be diminished, by 9-10ths of the insurance business being transferred to this great and chartered company.—It is also asserted, that much litigation would be prevented, and losses be recovered with greater facility and promptitude from this new company than from the underwriters at Lloyd's, who are accused of being litigious, and even unprincipled, in the defences they set up against just demands. That some individuals have at times availed themselves of points of law, of which underwriters in general have not taken advantage, I admit; but there are very few men whom interest, if not principle, would not prevent from selling their good name for any sum they could possibly gain by evading the payment of a loss. Underwriters, speaking of them collectively, are much more sinned against than sinning; no set of men on earth are so much the dupes of fraud and villany. They have paid, not only for vessels purposely lost, but on cargoes of stones and brick bats, packed up as bale goods; nay, even for vessels which it afterwards appeared never were in existence, though forged invoices, bills of lading, certificates of their having sailed,

and every requisite document, were regularly transmitted; and in order to prevent suspicion, one of the most respectable houses in the city was made the innocent instrument of this nefarious transaction. Such impositions practised upon men naturally tend to make them suspicious, and sometimes they certainly are so without just ground; but the question is not as to the positive degree of facility with which losses can be recovered at Lloyd's, but as to the comparative degree of greater facility with which they can be recovered at public offices. It is true that in settling with a public office, the assured has only to settle with a single person, instead of having to settle with the various individuals who have underwritten his policy; but this task is one which requires neither much time nor trouble, for almost all the parties sit under the same roof, and when the first underwriter on a policy has settled the loss, the others generally follow without any investigation of the papers. On the other hand, public offices are necessarily governed by certain fixed rules, and will not settle without regular documents, the production of which is frequently dispensed with at Lloyd's. Public offices will not pay on missing ships till the period is expired when the loss can be recovered by law; the underwriters pay without insisting on this delay, on an undertaking from the assured, that if the vessel should hereafter appear, he will put them in the same situation as if the loss had never been settled. Claims of liberality, which could not be maintained by law and which could not, perhaps, with propriety be admitted by the directors of a public company, acting for others, are frequently admitted at Lloyd's by individuals, each of whom is acting for himself. But, it is said that underwriters frequently go to law in order to put off the payment of losses, and that in such cases an action must be brought against each individual; whereas, if the insurance was effected with a public office, a single action would decide the contest, and thus much money now spent in litigation would be saved. That much money is now unnecessarily spent in litigation the underwriters know to their cost, for it is spent at their expence. The solicitor to the assured commences proceedings against every underwriter; the underwriters apply for a rule to consolidate, which the judge grants on condition of their paying all the charges hitherto in-

curred, and these fall so heavy, that an underwriter, where a case is doubtful, will frequently rather pay than litigate the demand. The public offices are not influenced by this consideration in the same degree, for they can contest a loss of 100,000*l.* at as little expence as an individual underwriter can contest his subscription of 100*l.*; and it is not very reasonable to expect that these parties will be least disposed to be litigious who have the strongest temptation to be so, unless we believe the directors of this new intended Marine Insurance Company not to be men of like passions with ourselves.—One of the allegations in the petition of this intended new company is, "that the trade and commerce of these kingdoms have increased so much since the two existing companies were incorporated, that these two companies do not at present insure more than three parts in one hundred of the ships, goods, and merchandize insured in Great Britain." On this it may be observed, that if the trade and commerce of these kingdoms have increased, the number of underwriters has increased in a still greater proportion; for the number of subscribers to Lloyd's in the year 1771 was only 79, and the present number is near 1,500. The small proportion of insurance business effected by the public companies, shews the general preference given by the commercial world to individual underwriters; and is the strongest proof that could possibly be adduced, not only of more moderate rate of premiums at which they transact business, but of the general confidence placed both in their probity and solidity.—The petitioners also state, "that several insurance companies have been established in the East and West Indies, and America;" and seem to wish to have it inferred, that these companies have been established for want of more insurance companies in Great Britain. Insurance is a natural appendage to commerce; and the establishment of insurance companies, or of individual underwriters, in every commercial country, may be sufficiently accounted for, by the desire merchants feel to transact their own business, rather than pay a commission for having it transacted by others; and the satisfaction they derive from holding in their own hands the policies of insurance by which their property is secured, instead of confiding the important trust of recovering upon them, in case of loss, to their foreign correspondents. In-

dependent of these general considerations, circumstances of a local and peculiar nature, will shew the indispensable necessity of such establishments being formed, in all the countries named by the petitioners. In the East Indies, opportunities of writing to England for insurance occur so seldom, that many voyages, more particularly those from one port to another, or country voyages as they are called, must be insured upon the spot, or not at all. It is also to be considered, that parties resident in India, if they insure there, recover a loss without delay; but if they insure in Great Britain, they cannot recover, and realize their funds, in less than eighteen months or two years; and this circumstance, coupled with the high rate of interest paid for money in India, will account for their preferring to insure there rather than in Europe: nor would the inducement so to do be at all lessened, by the establishment of this, or any other new insurance companies. In the West Indies, vessels going from one island to another, or from any of the islands to America must be insured there, unless one of the packets, which sail only once a month, should happen to be on the eve of her departure when the voyage commences; otherwise the issue of it may be known in England before the order for insurance arrives there. With respect to America, it is not to be expected that a country rising so fast into commercial importance, should form none of those establishments by which alone commerce can be secured; and it is also to be remarked, that our law prohibiting the insurance of enemies' property, not only prevents property really belonging to the enemy, but property liable to be suspected of belonging to the enemy, from being insured here; for as British underwriters cannot pay in case of British capture, parties whose vessels are brought in for adjudication, might, if they insured here, be ruined for want of their funds while the cause was pending, and therefore they insure in countries where there is no bar to their immediate recovery. From these observations, it appears that the extension of the insurance business in America is to be attributed to various causes, but more particularly to this law, which sacrifices commerce to policy; and that the case would not be altered by the establishment of this new company, unless, which I cannot suppose, they mean to insure against British capture, in violation of the law of the land.—The only ad-

vantage that I can discern in the establishment of this new company, is an advantage of which the gentlemen concerned have told us nothing, but which I shall now endeavour to develop; the advantage that would accrue to themselves. Their plan is to unite a very great proportion of the leading mercantile houses in this metropolis into a company, for the purpose of effecting their own marine insurances; and thus to retain, and divide among themselves, the emoluments hitherto made by the insurance brokers and underwriters at Lloyd's. They would retain the profit of the brokers, by effecting their own insurances at their own office; and as proprietors of that office, they would also divide among themselves the profit of the underwriters. They propose, too, acting on a scale hitherto unprecedented in point of extent and magnitude. Thus, by the boldness of their speculations, their profits may be increased to an almost incalculable amount; while their losses cannot possibly exceed the sum they offer to invest as the capital of their undertaking.—Before the House give their sanction to this measure, I trust they will seriously listen to the objections that offer both on public and private grounds, to the carrying it into effect.—The first objection that I shall state, is founded on its interference with the rights of individuals. Every profession, trade, or calling, requires some previous study and qualifications; and all writers on political economy agree in considering the time thus bestowed, and the expence thus incurred, by every individual, as a part of the useful productive capital of the state, as well as the just property of the party, in the enjoyment of the fruits of which he is entitled to legislative protection. I am aware that the occupations of an insurance broker and underwriter are generally considered as requiring but very superficial attainments; but a candid investigation of the subject will prove this idea to be erroneous. An insurance broker can only qualify himself for his business by considerable study and application: he must learn how to fill up policies of every description, with all the various clauses adapted to every possible circumstance; he must be able to make accurate declarations of interest, so as to cover the parties in case of loss, and yet not expose them to the payment of any unnecessary premium in case of arrival; he must know how to make up com-

statements of average and partial losses on every species of merchandize, and on the various principles applicable to every different case. He must be informed of the current rates of premiums on every voyage, in order that he may be enabled to transact the business entrusted to him to the best advantage; and he must be well acquainted with the character of the different underwriters, to guide him in the selection of the names he takes upon his policies. The underwriter must possess every species of knowledge requisite for the broker, (except indeed as to the solidity of his brother underwriters;) it being his province to examine all his papers and statements; in addition to which, he must be well versed in geography; must be informed of the safety or danger of every port and road in every part of the world; of the nature of the navigation to and from every country; and of the proper season for undertaking different voyages; he should be acquainted, not only with the state, but the stations of the naval force of his own country, and of the enemy; he should watch the appearances of any change in the relations of all foreign powers, by which his interests may be affected; and in short, constantly devote much time and attention to the pursuit in which he is engaged. Those who commence underwriters without the necessary qualification, or continue underwriters without the necessary caution, generally soon find their error, in their own ruin, and the injury of those with whom they are connected. The gentlemen who have subscribed to this new company, wish to become brokers and underwriters, without loss of time or hindrance of business; to put themselves in possession of their emoluments, without that study and labour, or those qualifications, by which alone they can be fairly acquired. Archimedes told Hiero, who wished to be a great mathematician all at once, that there was no royal road to geometry; and this observation may be justly applied to the acquirement of any other species of knowledge, or to the fruits of that knowledge. But the subscribers to this new company are endeavouring to find out a royal road to the profits of the insurance brokers and underwriters; and this royal road is an act of parliament, enabling the king to grant them a charter of incorporation.—The effect of establishing a company possessing such vast influence within itself, must be that this great leviathan will swallow up

all the small fry; that it will deprive the insurance brokers and underwriters of those avocations to which they have devoted their time, in which they have embarked their fortunes, and by which they have maintained themselves and their families. But it is contended, that these consequences will not ensue; that this New Marine Insurance Company will, on the contrary, encourage the insurance trade, by the increased facility and advantage it will afford; and that thus more new business will be brought to Lloyd's than will be taken away. They who so argue, if they believe what they say, must be weak indeed. The principle of this company is not competition, but combination; it even precludes all possibility of competition; for the proprietors tell you, that they possess nine-tenths of the commercial interest of the City of London, and that they wish to form themselves into a company, for the purpose of effecting their own insurances. Who then can wrest them out of their hands? Besides, if this company be incorporated, on what grounds can incorporations be refused to any other set of men? Every out-port will have its Marine Insurance Company; and if the merchants of this metropolis, who are not interested in this establishment, have sufficient business among them to form a second company, a second company will be established here, and thus the whole business of underwriting by individuals will be altogether annihilated.—Great as I consider the evil of this intended establishment to be in itself, I consider it as greater still, when I reflect on the ruin that it will inevitably bring on a numerous class of meritorious individuals, who, I may say, have more than ordinary claims to public consideration. The subscribers to Lloyd's, in promoting their own interests, have at the same time promoted those of their country; they have increased her revenue, and raised her commercial character as well as her prosperity. With a liberality not always found in public bodies, they freely and gratuitously communicate that intelligence to others, which they daily procure at a heavy expence to themselves. By a standing regulation of the house, access is given to their books in the non-subscribers' room, to every individual whose interest, or whose anxiety for his absent friends, may bring him there. The editors of the public papers constantly resort there also, and all the information the public receive

respecting shipping concerns comes from Lloyd's. The subscribers to Lloyd's have, at all times, been ready to set an example to their countrymen of public spirit and liberality. Their hands and hearts have ever been open to relieve the distress of those who have suffered, and to reward the valour of those who have distinguished themselves in the cause of their country. More particularly at the commencement of the present war, at a period of great and general public alarm, when every man expected to be obliged to contend for British liberty on British ground, they stood nobly forward; by a well-timed and spirited effort, they infused energy and confidence into the public mind, and gave an impulse to patriotism, which was felt, and most beneficially felt, to the very remotest corner of the British dominions. One unanswerable objection to this new company arises from the illegality of the principle on which it is founded. As the law now stands, if a merchant chooses to underwrite those policies of insurance which he is ordered by his correspondents to effect, he can only do so on the following terms:—if losses happen, he must pay those losses; but if the vessels arrive he cannot recover his premiums. So justly tenacious is the law of the great and salutary rule, that no man shall be at the same time agent and principal; that he shall not have an interest contrary to that of the party for whom he acts. This company is founded on the direct violation of this rule. Every member is to throw his policies into the common stock of the company, in which he is a proprietor, and thus to have an interest diametrically opposite to that of the party for whom he acts. Opposite in a double respect: in the first place, as the higher premium he pays, the greater will be his own profit; and in the next place, as if losses happen, it is his interest not to recover them, because they must come, in part, out of his own pocket. Nothing can be so indefensible, as for men thus to place themselves in a situation, where their interest draws one way, and their duty another. It is what the law positively forbids, and the whole object of this application to Parliament, is to enable the petitioners to do that as a company, which the law prohibits them from doing as individuals.—Let us now examine the consequences of this measure, as it would affect the general interest of commerce and of the public. Instead of 1,500 indi-

vidual underwriters, we should probably have five or six insurance companies, each represented and conducted by a secretary or managing director, as he may happen to be denominated. The whole race of insurance brokers too would be at an end; the merchants who now employ them retaining their profits also among themselves by effecting their own insurances at their own office; and instead of that system of fair and open competition which now prevails, we should have a system of close and secret combination. The secretaries of the different offices, by a good understanding with each other, might regulate the premiums as they pleased; and the merchants, the proprietors of these companies, could not be expected to be very active in reducing profits, which they would divide among themselves. The result of these practices would soon be, that foreigners would discover they could effect their insurances cheaper elsewhere; and would no longer send their orders to Great Britain. Thus even the parties themselves, though they might for a while reap the advantage of that high reputation which has been established by others; would not long profit by their own wrongs: the revenue would be injured, by the diminution of the present duty on policy stamps; and the public would be injured, by paying a higher price for every commodity imported, in consequence of the advance on premiums; it being an axiom in trade, that all charges fall ultimately upon the consumer.—But, if the prayer of these petitioners be granted, will the mischief end here? On the same principle that a few companies are permitted to engross and monopolize all the insurance business, why may not a few other companies be permitted to monopolize all the other business of this metropolis, and render individual merchants and traders as useless, as these petitioners seek to render individual underwriters and insurance brokers? Why may not the hon. member who brought up this petition, follow it up by another petition, praying for leave to incorporate a company of merchants trading to the West Indies? And why may not another hon. member, who has taken a very active part in supporting this petition, bring up another petition, praying for leave to incorporate a company of merchants trading to the United States of America? These gentlemen, with a few of their friends, might set on foot companies trading to every part of the globe, and

divide the commerce of the whole world among them. Every argument that can be urged in favour of the present plan, might be urged with equal force in favour of these new projects. Instances might be brought forward of the insolvency of some individual merchants, of the dishonesty or ignorance of others; and the advantages that would result both to the character of the nation, and the interests of all those connected with it, by placing the whole foreign trade in the hands of men, possessed of large capital, enjoying an unblemished reputation, and distinguished for high mercantile knowledge, might be urged as unanswerable reasons in favour of this new system. If any poor individual who was not taken under the shadow of the wing of one of these great companies, presumed to complain, he might be told, as the insurance brokers and individual underwriters are now told, that more commerce than ever would be brought to this country by this wonderful improvement, and that it was impossible his interests could suffer by a measure so fraught with public good. Unfortunately for such reasoning, but, happily for us, if we are wise enough to profit by experience, this experiment has already been tried, and the result stands recorded in history: for Mr. Hume tells us, that, during the reign of James I. in consequence of similar incorporations, "the trade of this kingdom was brought into great decay, being put into the hands of a few rapacious engrossers." Let us then guard against the beginning of these evils by discountenancing the present project. It is by the competition of individual exertions, that Great Britain has risen to her present unexampled height of commercial prosperity; and in proportion as that system is exchanged for a system of monopolizing combination, that prosperity will again decline.—Not merely the interest, but, the moral character of the nation, is at stake upon the issue of this measure. The great era of these incorporated companies was the year 1720, when the spirit of adventure in speculations of this sort inflamed the minds of the people to such a degree, that all sober industry and patient application were despised, and every man was intent upon making his fortune in a moment, by engaging in some of these undertakings. Not merchants alone, but many of the most ancient and noble families in this kingdom, as we read in the history of those times, were totally ruined by this

epidemic madness. I shall not repeat the history of the South Sea Company, and twenty other companies, which rose like bubbles and like bubbles burst, to the great emolument of the first projectors, and the ruin of the infatuated public, who purchased shares in them at a most enormous advance. More to my purpose is the history of the marine insurance companies, which were established at that very period. I find, in reading the records of those days, that in July, 1720, a very few months after the London Assurance Company received its charter, and before any considerable profits could possibly have been realized, the stock, on which only ten per cent. was paid, rose to 120, and even to 160—sixteen times the capital. That in the month of October in the same year, a hurricane, which destroyed part of the home-ward-bound Jamaica fleet, reduced their stock to sixty per cent.; and that other losses happening soon afterwards, it fell before the end of the year to 15, and even 12 per cent. The historian adds, that for years afterwards nothing more was heard of this Company except in the perpetual complaints of the proprietors, that they were cheated by the directors; and yet, Sir, this Company, like the intended New Marine Insurance Company, was first set on foot, by honourable men, lords and members of parliament. Even our prudent neighbours, the Dutch, were infected by the same mania; and with precisely the same result. A marine insurance company was established in 1720, at Rotterdam, and their actions or shares soon rose to 1,000 per cent. The shares of one established at the same time at Gouda, rose in a few months to the almost incredible premium of 3,000 per cent. on the capital advanced; and before the end of the same year, fell again to their original value. Another set up at Delft, experienced the same reverses within the same space of time; and, we read, that the avarice and gambling spirit of the proprietors, in every one of these companies, was ultimately punished by the entire loss of all their capital. The present scheme takes a more daring flight than any of its predecessors; it embraces a larger interest, professes to act on a wider scale, and is therefore more calculated than any plan ever hitherto projected, to dazzle the ignorant, and entrap the unwary.—That I may not be accused of having exaggerated in these statements, I refer those who hear me to

Postlethwaite's Dictionary of Commerce, under the articles Actions, Bubbles and Companies; and it is not unworthy of remark, that the able author of that work, considers the two latter words as synonymous terms; for under the article 'Bubbles,' he says, see 'Companies.'—It is far from my meaning to impute any sinister or unworthy motives to the gentlemen who have engaged in the present undertaking. On the contrary, I know many of them, with whom I have the honour of being acquainted, to be incapable of acting, but with the most laudable intentions. But, I believe they have engaged in it unadvisedly, and without due consideration of the consequences to which it would lead; and against those consequences it is my duty to guard the House. If this scheme is carried into effect, and the shares of the company rise, as I believe they will, to a price far beyond their real value, the present proprietors, as prudent men, will, like their predecessors, avail themselves of the public credulity, and sell out; the concern will fall into the hands of speculative adventurers, lose its present commercial influence, be misconducted, and the bubble will shortly burst, to the ruin of thousands. If this company obtains the sanction of parliament, the rage for these undertakings will be rekindled; other companies will be formed, and the capital of the country will be diverted into new channels, to the injury of all regular trade and solid property. No money will be obtained either on personal or landed security, and all the evils of the memorable year 1720 will be again renewed.—Marine insurances are effected in this country on more reasonable terms, and on more solid security, than in any other country upon earth. Neither the necessity nor the utility of this new company has been proved. On the contrary, I flatter myself I have shewn, that it is pregnant, both with private injury and public danger; and, therefore, that the prayer of these petitioners ought not to be granted. I am well aware of the inordinate influence possessed by the members of this intended new company; and, when I reflect, that there is scarcely a commercial member of this House who has not been offered, and that there are very few who have not accepted, shares in this undertaking, I almost tremble for the result, and anticipate the calamitous consequences which an eminent writer

says will inevitably ensue, "whenever commercial opulence shall become the accomplice of political power, for the purpose of obtaining undue advantages." But, I confide in the wisdom and justice of this House, to avert those consequences. I trust, that a project so exceptionable, will not receive their countenance in any stage whatever; and, therefore, that they will reject the motion of the hon. member for the appointment of this select committee.

Mr. A. Baring thought, that the arguments urged by the hon. gent. against monopolies, strongly applied against the matters complained of in the petition. When his hon. friend had stated that three-fourths of the mercantile body in London were in favour of the petition, it was his opinion that he might, with equal truth, have asserted, that 99 out of every 100 of that body were friends to it. He knew of no house in the city that was not strongly interested in the accomplishment of the object of the petitioners. The only question, then, before the House was, whether the petition should be referred to a select or to an open committee. For his own part, he was inclined to the select Committee. The whole course of precedent in the proceedings of that House lay that way. He was equally disposed to approve of the mode in which it was proposed to compose the Committee, because every disposition had been manifested in the selection of the members to provide with fairness for the interests of all the parties concerned. The case of the Globe Insurance Company would not apply, because that company extended its insurances to fire and lives. The petition before the House complained that the two chartered companies in existence were not able to afford the necessary facility for effecting marine insurances, and therefore prayed that further means should be provided, in any way which to the wisdom of the House might seem meet. If parliament were of opinion that this could be best effected by incorporated companies, as at the passing of the act of George the First, then he would be disposed to say, that the new company should be incorporated; not for the purpose of giving any opinion on the propriety or policy of such exclusive institutions, but with a view to extend the means of effecting marine insurances. His own opinion was decidedly, that the better mode would be to throw the business open generally. If,



however, it should be thought expedient to establish another company, he conceived that it should be confined altogether to marine insurances. As the other companies extended their assurances to fire and for lives, they must be materially prevented from attending sufficiently to the marine insurance branch. By the existing law, a law enacted for the purpose of giving an exclusive monopoly to the two chartered companies, no two men could join their capital for the purpose of insurance; but the vast accumulation of trade rendered it impossible for these companies to meet the full extent of the exigency. He could not but remark, in this place, the inconsistency into which the hon. gent. had fallen, by representing the capital of the proposed company as too small compared with the capital at Lloyd's to add much to the facilities of insurance, and afterwards arguing against the proposed company on the ground that it would bring ruin upon many of the underwriters at Lloyd's. It had been fairly stated that, generally speaking, an individual cannot stand against a company; but he would ask, whether upon the hon. gent.'s own reasoning that could be the case in the instance adverted to. His impression unquestionably was, that very considerable additional security would be afforded to merchants, if several individuals combined, and only one was to effect the insurance. The complaint of the merchants was, that the names of the underwriters had increased to such an extent, as no longer to afford them the same security as before. The great augmentation of trade, therefore, obliged the merchants often to take names on their lists which presented not the same assurance of security. In presenting their petition to the House, the merchants meant to be understood as impressed with a conviction, that, as the reserve had been made in the act, for putting an end to the charters granted by it, the period had arrived for acting upon that reserve. This they wished to have an opportunity to prove by evidence before a Committee. They also desired to shew that they wanted some sufficient security in the course of their business in respect to insurances. If the underwriters wanted capital, they were driven to dispute the claims for fair losses; and this furnished an inferior description of lawyers with opportunities of hunting out materials for vexatious litigation. All they wanted was to be allowed to prove

their case, and upon these grounds he should vote for the appointment of a Select Committee to examine into the matter.

Mr. Adam said, that the question before the House was whether the Petition in consideration should be referred to an open committee or to a select one. He was of opinion, that the most judicious mode of proceeding would be to refer it in the first instance to a Select Committee. He was fortified in that opinion by the analogous proceeding in the case of private bills, which were generally referred to the consideration of Select Committees. He thought too, that a Select Committee was better calculated to consult the interests of the parties concerned, whether the gentlemen at Lloyd's, the two insurance companies, or the public at large. Besides, he reminded gentlemen, that the adoption of the Select Committee, in the first instance, did not necessarily preclude them from subsequent proceedings in the open Committee, and that they might afterwards enter into the most enlarged and public discussion upon the merits of the question. Under these circumstances he expressed a hope that there would be no opposition to going into the Committee. —The gallery was then cleared for a division, when there appeared on the question for going into a Select Committee—Ayes 20—Noes 7. The above numbers not being sufficient to constitute a House, it of course adjourned.

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#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, February 15.

[CAPTAIN WARWCK LAKE'S COURT MARTIAL.] Sir Francis Buxton rose to call the attention of the House to a very interesting subject which he thought demanded their most serious consideration. He had no other authority relative to the fact which he wished to bring under the observation of the House, than the statement he had seen in the public newspapers, that a sea captain, in the British service, had been lately brought to trial by a court-martial, for a most inhuman act of wanton and deliberate barbarity towards a British seaman on board his own vessel. It was stated that he had put this seaman ashore upon a barren rock in the Western Islands without provisions, and exposed him to perish by famine; a circumstance which accidentally reached the knowledge of government through the

American newspapers. This officer was brought to trial by a court-martial, and on being proved guilty of the fact, he was merely sentenced to be dismissed the service. What the hon. baronet wished to know was, whether the government of the country meant to stop here with such a fact in proof before them, or, whether they meant to take any further steps upon a subject so disgraceful to the service, so materially interesting to the life and security of every seaman in his Majesty's fleet; a circumstance which, if so slightly passed over, might have the most serious effects in the naval service. As no farther steps were taken, nor seemed to be intended by government, he felt it his duty, in his place as a member of parliament, to call the attention of the House to the subject. He hoped, however, that government would not allow it to pass over without taking some further steps; for if such wanton and tyrannical occurrences were once suffered to obtain with impunity, there would be an end of all order and good government in our fleets.

Mr. R. Ward said, he knew nothing more of the transaction than that the captain, to whom he supposed the hon. baronet had alluded, was brought to a court-martial for the fact stated, had been found guilty, and sentenced by the court-martial to dismissal from the service. That sentence had since been carried into effect, and the board had it not in its power to do more.

Sir F. Burdett said, that he did not think his question had been answered. Was such a heinous act as the one in question to be allowed to pass with such comparative impunity? If it was, the principle might be carried to such an extent as to affect the security of the country in its most vital point. Was it to be endured—

—The *Speaker* said, that if the hon. member had any notice or motion to ground upon his statement, it would be for him then to proceed to make it, but that it was not conformable to the usages of that House to admit of the continuance of any discussion not arising out of a motion, as such must necessarily be productive of much inconvenience to the regular course of business.

Sir F. Burdett said, that he thought the question arising out of the statement he had made of much greater importance than any, involving the temporary convenience of gentlemen. (Cries of Chair! chair!) Matter of convenience ought to

give way to matter of life and death, affecting the subject. If indeed they felt nothing for the lives and liberties of English seamen—

The *Speaker* said, that it was imperative upon him as long as the House would support him, to insist upon the due observance of the rules and usages that regulated their proceedings. It was contrary to the practice of that House to admit of any debate when there was no question before them, or to entertain any motion of importance without a previous notice.

Sir F. Burdett said, that he felt it exceedingly hard upon him to be beat down in such a manner, in the statement of what he thought a great public grievance. (Chair! chair!) The hon. baronet then said, that he would take a day or two to consider what would be the best form to bring the matter before the House, and that he would for the present content himself with that general notice.

[ABUSES IN THE NAVY AND BARRACK DEPARTMENTS.] Mr. Wardle rose, in pursuance of notice, to move for certain papers respecting the appointments to civil situations in the barrack department and some of the departments of the navy. He had stated on a former evening, that it was his intention thereon to found generally some propositions for bettering the situation of a large body of useful, meritorious public servants, who had suffered materially from the system of abuse which had been carried on in some of the navy departments. His object in this motion was to shew to the House, that many instances had occurred of abuses in the appointments of both departments; and if the papers should be granted, he would pledge himself to prove his statement to be perfectly correct. Apprehensive, however, that the papers would be refused, he should feel it necessary to go into the subject at some length, in order to shew that he had not brought forward his motion without sufficient grounds. A gentleman had applied to him not long since, who had stated to him certain instances of abuses, and requested he would take some notice of the subject in the House. He had assured him, that having a place in the naval department, from which he was obliged to retire, he was told by an officer that he was intitled to some remuneration in consequence; and that upon this subject he had applied without effect to the lords of the Admiralty. The same gentleman also stated that he was informed

it was not unusual, when lord Barham was comptroller of the navy, to sell places in the navy office. Mr. Wardle said he did not know how such a practice could be considered fair or proper, as he recollected that a prosecution had been some time ago directed against a person for only attempting to purchase a place under government. Indeed he could not have supposed that the practice could be looked upon as innocent, if he had not heard from an hon. member to whom he had communicated his motion since he came down to the House that it was not considered any abuse. He did not know, whether lord Barham would vindicate the practice; but as things were circumstanced, he conceived it highly necessary that inquiry should take place: more especially when so late as the 31st of October, 1809, a specific charge was made against a Mr. Prentice, for the sale of clerkships in the barrack department, five or six places were stated to have been actually sold by him; but no inquiry on this subject had yet taken place. He therefore stated the facts, and trusted the House would go with him in calling for the papers; and he would be content to abandon his charge, if he did not substantiate it from the vouchers.

In the Navy Pay Office and Admiralty, he understood that the appointments were made on a fair and equitable footing; the salary being proportioned to length of service; but there were other offices where the case was quite the reverse. In the Navy Office for instance, it was usual to promote junior clerks over the heads of men who were many years their seniors in the service. There was one instance in which a junior clerk, who had been but 11 years in the office, was promoted to a place of 300*l.* a year, over the heads of senior clerks who had been from 27 to 30 years in the service. That fact he should undertake to prove to the satisfaction of the House, if the papers for which he intended to move should be granted. Such a practice as this would, he was convinced, appear to the House to call for a speedy and effectual remedy. It was his opinion that it could not be justified upon any public grounds, and could arise from no other cause than that some of the places were sold, and others not. He would repeat the assertion, that to him the difference in the amount of these salaries was to be attributable to no other cause; and all he asked for were the do-

cuments, in order to shew that it must be so.—There was another point to which he wished their attention to be directed concerning the superannuated list, and particularly the case of a gentleman who had been superannuated against his will. The officer to whose case he alluded, had been obliged to retire on an allowance of 170*l.* per annum, and a boy of 14 years of age was then appointed to his situation, over the heads of senior clerks, and at a raised salary. [In what department? across the table.] In the Sick and Hurt Office; and the case he should prove if the documents should be granted to him. The usual mode of superannuating officers was entirely done away in this instance. He wished also to bring the case of Mr. Butt, a case of much hardship, under the consideration of the House. [What date? was asked.] In the year 1794. With regard to the pension list in that office on its being removed from Somerset House to Dorset Square, he should shew that one officer, the secretary, was pensioned off at his full salary of 500*l.* and an assistant appointed in his stead at a raised salary of 1,000*l.* being exactly double what the former officer had.—In addition to all these cases, he had another not less worthy of the attention of that House to advert to, namely, the creation of several new offices, with very unmerited salaries annexed—salaries for which no duties of correspondent value were to be performed. These practices took place amongst the commissioners of the navy, and the new offices were given to the members of the Committee of these commissioners. One gentleman, for acting as chairman of that Committee, was allowed 200*l.* in addition to his former salary of 1,000*l.* and each of the members had an additional 150*l.* But to entitle these gentlemen to such augmentation of income, no additional duties were required of them. All the business they had to do was performed within the usual hours of their sitting, and in the Committee-room; so that he should contend that no additional salary ought to have been allowed to them.—Having said thus much, in order to satisfy the House as to the grounds of his bringing these subjects under consideration, he should not trespass longer upon its time, but conclude with moving, “That there be laid before the House copies of all letters which passed between the lords commissioners of the admiralty and Mr. Butt, late clerk in the Navy Office, relative to his claims

for compensation, and his subsequent resignation, between the 1st of May, 1809, and the 16th of January, 1810; and also, copies of all letters which passed between the first lord of the admiralty and that person within the same period."

Mr. R. Ward, observing that the hon. gent. had divided the object of his motion in his notice under two heads, one as relating to the admiralty, the other to the barracks, said, that of course it could not be expected that he could speak to the latter part. As to what had been said by the hon. member relative to the case of Mr. Butt, he must be allowed to say, that he misrepresented the case itself, as much as he had done what he (Mr. Ward) had communicated to him on that subject since his coming to the House that day. The hon. member had represented him as having said, that the practice he denounced, namely, the sale of offices, was not an abuse. Now, he had never said so, nor was he of that opinion. He had asked for the date of the case respecting Mr. Butt, because he had never before heard of it. He supposed it, however, to have been a case of the sale of an office. Such a case, he knew, was abstractedly an abuse; but, if the practice was sanctioned by long usage, it could not justly have been considered criminal in those concerned in it. As well might it be considered criminal in judges to sell offices in the courts of law, though the parliament recognized their right to dispose of them for money. The noble person whose name had been mentioned by the hon. gent. could, he was convinced, have no objection to the fullest investigation of every transaction which took place during his official service. But before the House should sanction such an inquiry, it was bound to see that good grounds were laid for it: What was the fact? In 1786, a Committee was appointed to inquire into the extent and propriety of fees. Lord Barham, then sir C. Middleton, who was at the head of the navy board, and the other commissioners of that board, were examined before the Committee, and fairly and openly stated that their salaries were made up in part of gratuities and fees received in consequence of the practice alluded to. The report of the Committee declared that the practice was a bad one, but not that the exercise of it was an abuse or criminal in any of those who had been concerned in it. The words of the report were, "That the practice of receiving

gratuities on the appointment of clerks was bad, though it had been sanctioned by long usage." In ten years after, the practice was abolished, and in consequence the salary of the comptroller was raised from 500*l.* nominally, to 1,500*l.* and an addition of 200*l.* given to the other commissioners. As to what had been said by the hon. gent., with respect to the promotion of a junior over senior clerks, as he had not stated any specific case, nor charged the practice as having been founded in corruption or undue motives, the House, he was persuaded, would not think this an inquiry to be entertained, to the great detriment of public business, and the mischievous embarrassment of the public offices. The Sick and Hurt Office, to which the hon. gent. had alluded, no longer existed. It was incorporated with the Transport Office, and this change had given rise to arrangements highly advantageous to the public service. If the hon. member charged the pension which had been granted to sir W. Gibbons, on the suppression of the board to which he had belonged, as an instance of corruption, he must go on to charge the beneficial arrangements which followed the suppression of that office, as a corrupt transaction. The pension was granted upon the same principle as governed every similar case. Upon all these grounds, he should vote against the motion, so far as the navy board was concerned.

Mr. Wilberforce hoped that the hon. gent. would withdraw his opposition to the motion, because, as the question had been brought forward, it would be much more reputable for the noble person alluded to, that a full and thorough investigation of the case should take place. As the friend of that noble lord, he wished that the inquiry should proceed, and should be sorry that any proceeding in that House should prevent the question from being placed in the clearest possible light. He could state of his own knowledge, that all the arrangements for reform which had been adopted subsequently to the report of 1786, had been introduced at the express desire of lord Barham. In short, that noble person, at the time, consented to remain in office only on the condition that these reforms should be carried into effect.

Mr. Noel concurred in the sentiments that had been expressed by the hon. gent. of his noble relation. He was certain that it was the wish of his noble relation that the motion should be assented to, because any

inquiry must tend to set forth his character in its true light.

Sir *F. Burdett* conceived that it was necessary the papers should be produced. The hon. gent. had allowed that it was injurious to the service that the practice should be continued, a practice which he stated was sanctioned by time. This was the general argument when any thing was wrong: it had been so in the case of lord Macclesfield, but he was not aware that the feelings of those times were not to govern the present. Lord Macclesfield had been found guilty of selling the places of masters in Chancery, and a severe punishment had followed. According to the statement of the hon. gent. this improper practice ought to have stopped in 1786. Now, his hon. friend had stated similar transactions to have taken place in 1794. Was not that a reason for inquiry? The hon. gent. had stated, that sir *W. Gibbons* had a pension given him, on the incorporation of two departments; but he did not know the fact before, nor would he pretend to say it was a job, though it looked very like one, but he was at a loss to conjecture why it was that a commissioner of the Sick and Hurt Office, should have a pension. What possible services could he have done to the public, that they should be burdened with a pension for him?

Mr. *W. Pole* begged to state, that when he was secretary to the admiralty, it was the anxious wish of lord Mulgrave, that the same regulations which prevailed in the navy pay-office and in the admiralty, might also be adopted in the navy office. But from the constitution of the establishment of the clerks; it was found, after an attentive investigation of the case, that these regulations could not be introduced into the pay-office, without a considerable sacrifice of expence. In this opinion too the commissioners of Naval Revision concurred. This statement he felt it his duty to make, and he hoped it would be satisfactory to the hon. gent.

Mr. *Whitbread* should vote for the papers, on the ground of what had been stated by his hon. friend, and the two friends of the noble lord:

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* did not think the House ought to feel in the same manner as the friends of the noble lord, nor agree to the motion, unless a sufficient ground were laid for it. The Report of the committee of 1786 recommended the abolition of fees, and an increase of sa-

lary in lieu of them. The Order in Council for the abolition of the fees did not issue till 1796, so that the old practice continued till that period. As the fact, to which the paper moved for applied, had taken place before that period, he trusted the House would not think any inquiry into a practice, not then prohibited, necessary. As to what had been said relative to a transaction in the barrack department, it would have been desirable that the hon. gent. had been more explicit.

Mr. *Wardle*, in reply, informed the right hon. gent. that a written statement had been given in to the commissioners of the barrack board on the 31st of October last, by *Wm. Pearse*, a clerk in that department, containing an accusation against a *Mr. Prentice*, another clerk employed in a very responsible and confidential office in that department, that he had sold the offices in it, and that too since the bill of the right hon. gent. against the sale of offices. It also charged him with having employed clerks to prepare false accounts. He had further to state, that a letter had also been written to the lords of the treasury, stating the practice, and calling their attention to it. He had himself seen the letters, and he could assure the House, that they would bear out his statement.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* declared his readiness to agree to the motion for the production of these papers.

Lord *Folkestone* having received information, that, in consequence of a prosecution sometime since instituted against a firm for the sale of offices in the city, the penalties of which prosecution the parties were now suffering, some papers or letters implicating other parties in similar offences had been put into the hands of the law officers of the crown, he wished to be informed by these gentlemen, whether such documents had been given to them; and if so, whether it was their intention to take proceedings against the parties so implicated.

The *Attorney-General* answered, that it had been stated by the parties, the objects of the prosecution (*Messrs. Pohlman and Keylock*,) in order to give colour to their own practices, that persons high in office were concerned in the sale of offices. Amongst others, it had been stated that the duke of Portland made 30,000*l.* a year by the sale of offices, and also that the lord chancellor was engaged in the practice. Upon such grounds he could not

harbour the slightest suspicion, still less institute a prosecution. He had no paper of the kind mentioned by the noble lord put into his hands, and consequently he had no proceedings to institute.

The *Solicitor General* stated, that he neither had received any such documents nor information.

Mr. *Hiley Addington* said, that after the statement which an hon. member had made of existing abuses in the Barrack department, he should support his motion respecting them, but he should oppose the production of the correspondence between the first lord of the Admiralty and Mr. Butt, as no specific charge was made against lord Barham.—The first motion was then put and negatived without a division.

Mr. *Wardle* next moved for a general return of all the clerks in the different departments in the Navy Office, Navy Pay-Office, Sick and Hurt, and Transport Board, with the dates of their entries, ages, periods of their service, salaries at which they entered, and the augmentations since made to them, &c.

Mr. *R. Ward* said, the hon. member might as well move for a committee of the House, to take into consideration the salaries allowed to every clerk in the different offices under government, and that, too, without any case made out. If the hon. gent. however, would come forward with any specific case, or with any corrupt charge, he should be ready to second his motion.

Mr. *Wardle* repeated what he had already said, that there were in these departments senior clerks, unexceptionable in point of character and ability, of 27 years standing, with salaries of 200*l.* a year, and junior clerks in the same offices, without better qualifications, who had salaries of 400*l.* or 500*l.* a year.

Mr. *D. Giddy* said, all considerations being equal, he should certainly wish to give the preference to seniority; but if there could be any one thing more ruinous than another it would be to act on this as a general principle, particularly in public offices. It would go the length of saying, that a person who was the senior must be preferred even over one of the greatest capacity.—The motion was put and negatived without a division.

Mr. *Wardle* then moved for a copy of the Memorial or Statement from Mr. W. Pearce, late clerk in the Barrack department, sent to the commissioners on barrack

affairs, in 1809, with a letter to the lords of the treasury, calling their attention to that memorial.—Ordered.

[EMBEZZLEMENT BILL.] Sir *John Newport* moved that this bill be recommitted. The House having resolved into the Committee,

Mr. *Rose* thought that some case should have been laid before the House by the hon. baronet, as the ground upon which he had thought it right to bring forward this measure. He did not feel it necessary to augment the list of felonies, without cause; and he was apprehensive, that if the Bill were to pass in its present form, it would be productive of great inconvenience and embarrassment to the public service. Gentlemen of respectability would not feel desirous of engaging in the public service in places of great trust in the collection of the revenue, with the penalty of transportation hanging over them, as would be the case if this Bill were to pass; and upon a charge so difficult to be defined, and so easy to be misrepresented and misconceived as embezzlement.

Sir *John Newport* expressed some surprise at this delicate sensibility on the subject of penalties when they approached a public office, where the son or the brother of a great man might be affected. He had stated on a former occasion the circumstance of a collector, who had absconded with 27,000*l.* of the public money in his hands, and had afterwards been taken with 7,000*l.* of it in his possession, as the ground of this bill. In that case, if the clerk of that collector had been guilty, he would have suffered death; but as the law at present stood, no adequate punishment could be inflicted upon the principal, and, therefore, the law officers had not thought it desirable to proceed against him. It was to remedy this glaring defect in the law that he had brought forward this bill. When he considered that the right hon. gent. must have been a party to the passing of a bill imposing the penalty of death on the clerk or cashier of a bank for embezzlement; and also to the act, rendering it a transportable offence to shoot, ensnare, or kill deer in a close park or paddock, he could not help admiring his tender sensibility on the present occasion. But whatever might be the tender sensibility of gentlemen, he would contend, that it was the duty of that House, to mete out equal justice to all; to have but one and the same law for the rich and for the poor. Could they forget the cases of Mr.

Villiers and Mr. Hunt, as well as others which had recently occurred, or could any one, who reflected upon the consequences of such cases remaining unpunished, think the punishment of transportation was too severe for the crime of fraudulently embezzling or making use of public money? It would be for a jury to determine what was the embezzlement. Convinced of the justice and necessity of the measure, he had brought it forward.

Mr. Rose disclaimed any wish to protect public delinquents, and declared himself as ready as the hon. baronet, to punish any offender, convicted of a crime of that description.

The *Attorney General* thought there was a very essential difference between the cases of embezzlement of Bank, South Sea Company, and merchants' clerks, and the situation of receivers of public money. These receivers often mixed the public money with their own, and had frequently a certain time allowed them to keep it in their hands, so that it would be impossible to say when they fraudulently made use of it; whereas, clerks of merchants, of banks, or of the South Sea Company, had no right to mix their master's money with their own, and if they did, and made use of it, so as not to be able to pay when called on, it was clearly a fraudulent embezzlement. He thought the doctrine urged by the hon. baronet, that the House made severe laws for the poor, and not for the rich, was as improper as any that had been used in that House.

Mr. H. Thornton objected to the term, "fraudulently made use of," and proposed, that instead of "use of," should be substituted, "away with," so that the words would then be "fraudulently made away with."—On the question being put,

The *Solicitor General* strongly objected to the whole principle of the clause, as going to deprive government of every security it now had, in the event of any deficiency arising in the accounts of receivers of public money. At present the embezzlement of public money was punished as a misdemeanor, by which the delinquent was subject to unlimited fine and imprisonment, and even to pillory; while, at the same time, all his property, of whatever description, his person also, and all the property of his sureties, were subject to Writs of Extent, for the security of the debt due to the public. By the present measure, however, supposing a

public defaulter to flee the country, not only the property of his sureties, but even any estates he himself might leave behind him, would be free, as the debt must merge in the felony.

Sir S. Romilly concurred, that great inconvenience would result from making this felony. But the objection might be obviated by leaving out the word felony, and supposing the offence to remain a misdemeanor, subject, however, to the proposed punishment by transportation for seven years, which might be inflicted at present for perjury, and other misdemeanors. He did not say, however, that all offences of this nature ought to be so heavily punished.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that leaving out the word felony would be a considerable amendment. But there was still a difficulty as to what part of using or making away with would be liable to the punishment. The first thing must be to define this exactly, and then certainly there could be no objection to the infliction of a severe punishment on the transgression of the law. But, at present, he suggested, that the Chairman should report progress.

After a few words from Mr. H. Smith, and Mr. Thomson, the Chairman reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on this day se'nnight.

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#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, February 16.

[OFFICES IN REVERSION BILL.] The order of the day being read, for the second reading of this Bill,

The *Lord Chancellor* observed, that he believed he was regular in moving, that the Act of the 48th Geo. 3, respecting Reversions, be now read.

The Clerk having read the said Act,

Earl Grosvenor was not disposed to enter into the merits of the present Bill, against which he understood an objection would be taken, in the first instance, as to some technical informality. Now, he should wish to hear what those technical objections were; for, if he should find them of sufficient validity, he should reserve his observations for a future occasion, when the bill might be freed from informalities of that nature.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he had moved the reading of the former Act, in order, that their lordships might be fully aware of the nature of the objection, which, he

thought, was fatal to the present bill. He was anxious to avoid entering into the merits of the bill, his object merely being to state the objection which appeared upon the face of the proceeding. The Act for Suspending the Granting of Offices in Reversion, &c. was passed by that House in 1808, with a recital, stating, that it was expedient with a view to inquiries depending in the House of Commons, and the suspension was limited to one year, and to the end of six weeks, after the commencement of the then next session of Parliament. This bill had now come up to the House, and purported to be a bill for rendering perpetual an Act, entitled, an Act for suspending for one year, and until six weeks after the commencement of the then next session of Parliament, &c. He put it to their lordships, whether, under such circumstances, for this was not a mere technical objection, it was not due to the gravity and dignity of their own proceedings, to take some decisive step with respect to this bill. His own opinion was, that the objection could not be cured in a Committee, and that the bill ought not to go to a second reading. The recital of the inquiries that were pending, and upon which the bill passed that House, were understood to be with the view of discovering what offices it would be proper to abolish, and with that view it was fit that no impediment should arise in the mean time, but this could be evidently no argument for rendering a bill of this limited nature, perpetual.

Earl Grosvenor had not heard any argument from the noble and learned lord to induce him to think that this bill ought to be rejected. It was a subject respecting which there was a great anxiety on the part of the public, and he thought no time ought to be lost in considering it. He did not see the alledged inconsistency in the point of view urged by the noble and learned lord, nor did he think that if the bill were to pass in its present shape it would involve any absurdity.

The Lord Chancellor put the question for the second reading, which was negatived. He then moved, that the bill be rejected; which was agreed to.

Earl Grosvenor then gave notice, that he should as soon as possible bring in another bill not liable to the same objection.

[PROPERTY TAX IN SCOTLAND.] The Lord Advocate of Scotland rose, to move for the production of certain papers relative to the produce of the taxes in Scotland. He had been induced to submit to the House a motion on the subject, from an assertion that had been made on a former occasion by the noble lord opposite, (Mahon), stating that the Property Tax of Scotland was by no means proportionably productive to that of England, or to the amount of the other taxes in Scotland. This mistake must have arisen from two grounds, to which he felt it his duty to call the attention of the House. In the first place, the noble lord had taken his estimate of the Income Tax in Scotland from the produce of 1806, when that duty was only  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and had compared it with that of England, of a subsequent year, when the duty was 10 per cent. A second ground of mistake, that had been entirely overlooked by the noble lord, was the circumstance of much of the Income Tax for Scotland being payable in England, and which of course being added to that of England, had a two-fold operation in producing this erroneous statement, adding to that of England what did not strictly belong to it, while it deducted from that of Scotland in the same proportion. From the papers he should move for, it would appear, that in 1808, the net assessment of the Income Tax was 800,000*l.* collected in Scotland; but, from the principle he had already laid down, it would be evident that a very considerable additional sum must be added to the amount for Scotland, though collected in England; such was every description of property in the funds, all East India stock, navy and exchequer bills, and in short every species of public stock, which must be very considerable.—While all this was necessarily deducted from the real produce of the Scotch property tax, it was at the same time added to that of England, and thus gave to England an amount that did not belong to it. The whole amount of the tax upon money paid to the army and navy, on half-pay and allowances to widows, with other monies of a similar description, came also under the head of England, as well as the different sources of emolument connected with India, and our other settlements. There were, besides, many goods manufactured in Scotland that were sold in England, the estimated returns upon which were likewise added to the amount for England. He



might add also the Stamp Office, the Post Office, and in general all stamp duties, which though levied in Scotland, were added to the assessment in England. In fact, it would be difficult to ascertain how far this principle might be carried, nor did he think it would be of much importance to enquire. At any rate, he was of opinion that they could not allow less than 200,000*l.* that on this principle was to be added to the Income Tax of Scotland, and deducted of course from that of England, which would make the whole for Scotland amount to a million; and deducting that from the 11,300,000*l.* for England, would make the duty for Scotland amount to more than 1-11th of that for England, or about 1-12th of the whole of the United Kingdom. This would, at the same time, make a fair proportion of the Property Tax for Scotland to the whole of the other taxes arising from that part of the United Kingdom; namely, about 1-5th, the whole independent of the Property Tax being about four millions. The whole taxes for Scotland were now about 1-11th of those of England, and on looking back to the Union, it would be found that they had considerably increased in favour of Scotland, they being at that period only 1-14th of those of England. In 1800, the Assessed Taxes were only 1-18th, but were now 1-11th of those of England. His lordship concluded by moving, That there be laid before the House an account of the net assessment of the Property Tax for Scotland from 1803 to the latest period the same could be made out, distinguishing each year. Also an account of net assessment of the other duties, from the 24th of May 1800, to the latest period the same could be made out, distinguishing each year.

Lord Mahon was ready to second the motion of the learned lord, and gave him credit for the clear manner in which he had made out his statement. He had made the observation that had been alluded to, from a conviction that the sum he noticed could not be the whole of the Property Tax for Scotland, and that there could not be possibly such a disproportion to that of England. The noble lord had accounted, in a considerable degree, for the disproportion, and he was glad that an enquiry was to take place.

Mr. H. Thornton, advertent to the late collection of the Income Tax in Scotland, the duties of 1806 being only collecting, as appeared, in 1809, supposed that this

circumstance might be owing to the rents being sooner collected in England than in Scotland.

Mr. Horner was of opinion, that some enquiry into this subject was desirable, and complained particularly of the slow remittance of the taxes from Scotland. He was not aware that rents were less expeditiously paid in Scotland than in this country, but the mode of collecting the taxes, he was afraid, was not so complete. In the county of Forfar alone, there were not less last year than from 2 to 3,000 appeals. The property tax was collected from the tenantry, and proved the greater hardship, and a source of such oppression to that class of men.

The *Solicitor General* for Scotland had the satisfaction to inform his hon. friend, that this subject had attracted the attention of government, and was at present under the consideration of his Majesty's ministers.

Mr. Huskisson assured the House, that, while he had the honour of holding an office under the board of treasury its attention had been called to the subject, in consequence of the small remittances received from Scotland on account of the revenue of that country.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

[*KING'S MESSAGE RESPECTING PORTUGUESE TROOPS.*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer presented the following Message from his Majesty :

"*GEORGE R.* His Majesty thinks it proper to acquaint the House of Commons, that his Majesty has authorised pecuniary advances to be made to Portugal in support of the military exertions of that kingdom.—His Majesty is desirous of being enabled to continue such support, and he has directed an arrangement to be made with the Portuguese government for extending his assistance to the maintenance of a body of troops, not exceeding 30,000 men. His Majesty trusts that his faithful Commons will enable him to carry this arrangement into effect. *G. R.*"

[*KING'S MESSAGE RESPECTING AN ANNUITY TO LORD WELLINGTON.*] The House having resolved into a Committee, on his Majesty's Message, relative to the grant of an Annuity of 2,000*l.* per annum to lord viscount Wellington,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose, and said, that in consequence of his Majesty's most gracious Message, recommending to that House, the grant of a pension to lord Wellington, it would not be necessary for

him to trespass long upon the time of the Committee, in order to impress them with the propriety of adopting the motion he had to propose. He could certainly not anticipate any objection to that motion, which would have the effect of inducing the House to withhold its concurrence; but in order to render the grounds upon which his motion was founded more clear, he should, in the first place, state to the Committee the circumstances under which it was brought forward; and unless that House should be prepared to depart from its uniform and established practice in all similar cases, he was persuaded it would not dissent from the proposition with which he should conclude. The facts were these: his Majesty, as soon as the intelligence had been received of the brilliant, glorious, and decisive victory of Talavera, had conferred upon the gallant officer who commanded in that memorable action, the honour of a title—an honour to which all those who devoted their talents and lives to military pursuits, looked up with the most ardent and laudable anxiety—an honour, the proudest distinction that can be conferred on a brave soldier, the highest object of his generous ambition; and at the same time the best reward of eminent services. In conferring this mark of his royal approbation and favour, his Majesty had thought it right to recommend by his Message to parliament, that it should be accompanied by a grant of some pecuniary pension, in the same manner as was usual in all such cases. In considering the propriety, and estimating the justice of the advice which had been given to his Majesty in both instances, it might perhaps be proper to confine the House to the simple consideration of the distinguished and exalted merit of the noble viscount upon the particular occasion. But it would neither be just to his Majesty nor to lord Wellington, that this should be looked upon in the same light as the case of an officer for the first time presenting himself, by his services, to the notice of his sovereign and the admiration of his countrymen. In estimating the claims of lord Wellington to the distinction conferred upon him, and the provision proposed to accompany it, they should look to what he had been—consider his past conduct, and derive, from his former distinguished services, strong accessory grounds of claims for his present honours and rewards. But tried even by the test of his late services, how did that gallant officer

present himself to his sovereign and his country? He had, by the glorious operations he had conducted, and the victories he had achieved, he could not say raised, but certainly most eminently sustained the military renown of the army, and the unfading lustre of the British name and character. He presented himself to his Majesty, as the distinguished commander, who had already extended the glory of the British arms over the peninsula of India: he presented himself as the conqueror of Soult—and the general, who by the signal victories he gained in Portugal, expelled the French from that country, and rescued a kingdom, the rightful inheritance of our ally, from the grasp of the enemy. In short, he presented himself to his Majesty with such an accumulation of merits—such an aggregate of eminent services—such an unvaried career of victory and triumph, as could not fail to obtain for him the most signal mark of his Majesty's favour, and the unlimited gratitude of his country.—Looking, therefore, to all these considerations; looking also to the Vote of Thanks, which had been recently passed by that House, and which must be considered as expressive of its sentiments, he could not suppose any serious objection could be made to his motion. The Vote of Thanks, he must admit, had encountered some opposition; yet the general sense of the House was so strongly and decisively in its favour, that those with whom the opposition originated had not thought it right to come to a vote, conscious that their numbers would not be sufficient to make any impression on the House or on the country. If the House, therefore, did not disapprove of that Vote, if on the contrary it had been carried with a feeling almost unanimous and universal, what more was required as the foundation for his motion? Was there an instance upon record that would justify parliament in refusing the grant of the pension proposed? The amount of that pension was 2,000*l.* a year to lord Wellington, to descend to his two next heirs in succession on whom the title may devolve. This provision was no more than had been granted to lord Lake; it was precisely the same as the pension that had been granted to lord Hutchinson; precisely the same as had been settled upon lord Duncan; precisely the same as was given to lord Collingwood; precisely the same as had been settled upon the relict of general sir Ralph Abercromby. Whatever might be the disposition of other gen-

tle men, it was not his intention or his wish to take upon him the invidious and ungracious office of entering into idle comparisons; but if the task were imposed upon him, he could assure the hon. gentlemen opposite, that he would have no cause to shrink from performing it. Upon the strength of the instances to which he had adverted, he should rest the defence of the proportion of pension which he meant to propose. Many other cases, he had no doubt, could be produced in justification and support of the amount of the intended grant, which would shew that it was a provision in extent consistent with the uniform practice of parliament in rewarding the services of distinguished officers. He would defy any gentleman to shew any case to the contrary; unless, perhaps, in the instance of officers of considerable opulence, to whom the amount of the provision must have been of less value than the honours of the peerage. Upon what ground any opposition could be made to the grant of the pension in this case, he was therefore at a loss to conceive. Was it on the ground of economy that it was to be refused? Were gentlemen then prepared to say, that on the occasion of such services, such grants as that under consideration should be refused upon such a ground? What principle of narrow economy ought to be suffered to arrest the grant of such pensions and rewards, as were calculated not alone to recompense past services, but to kindle an active emulation in every branch of the public service, and call forth the most strenuous exertions and honourable ambition of gallant and enterprising individuals? Nothing could be a more powerful incitement to zeal, activity, and exertion than the prospect of such distinction as had been conferred upon lord Wellington. But the bare title was not sufficient, unless accompanied by some adequate provision in the form of a pension. To withhold the pension, therefore, he contended, would be injurious to the individual—injurious to the public service, and inconsistent with the justice and liberality of parliament. A niggardly economy in a case like the present would be worse than the most indiscriminate prodigality; and it would be even an injury to the constitution to grant such honours, without taking care that an allowance should be made to support the dignity of the persons on whom they were conferred. Having said enough in his opinion to impress the

Committee with the propriety of the grant, he should not trespass longer on their time, but move, "That it is the opinion of the Committee that a pension of 2,000*l.* per annum be settled on lord viscount Wellington, and on the two next heirs to his title in succession, &c." On the question being put on this motion,

Mr. *Howard* rose and spoke against the motion, on the ground that the battle of Talavera was followed by none of the consequences of victory, and rather displayed ill-judged rashness on the part of lord Wellington, than deliberate and skilful valour. He contrasted the battle of Talavera with lord Nelson's decisive victory at Aboukir, for which that great man was only raised to the peerage; with a pension only equal to what was now proposed. How different were the two battles! The hon. gent. dwelt strongly on the impropriety of the advance of the army to Talavera, and urged the retreat and disasters which followed the action, as grounds for withholding the pension.

Mr. *Calcraft* observed, that the able speech of the hon. gent. who preceded him, had rendered it unnecessary for him to go as much at length, as he had intended, into the consideration of the question. He congratulated that hon. gent. and the House, on the accession of eloquence and talents which it acquired in that hon. gent. Though what he had to say might not coincide with the sentiments of the majority of that House, nor with the sense of the public, yet no consideration of that kind should deter him from doing what he considered to be his duty. The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had asserted, that because his Majesty had been advised to advance lord Wellington to the peerage, it would be a deviation from the uniform practice of that House not to add to that honour the grant of a pension. Surely the right hon. gent. could not think of making any comparison between the services of lord Wellington and the services of the distinguished officers to whose cases he had referred, in order to justify the amount of pension proposed to be granted. He could never think to compare the battles of Talavera with the victories of Nelson. Did the right hon. gent. mean to say, that the claims of lord Wellington were equal to those of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who closed a long life of eminent and meritorious service, by crowning it with a signal and brilliant victory? For himself

he could not consider either of the actions for which lord Wellington was to be rewarded, as a victory, neither had been followed by any of the consequences of success, neither had they any one characteristic of victory; but, on the contrary, both exhibited every symptom of a defeat! Examine the battle of Talavera. Did you advance? Did you not, on the contrary, retreat in the most disgraceful manner, and under the most calamitous circumstances? Did you not leave at Talavera one tenth part of your army? As to the amount of loss in battle, that could be no proof of victory or defeat. But he should ever contend, that the advance of lord Wellington to a situation in which his army was in danger of starving, unless he should fight against superior numbers, or make a disgraceful flight, was a great military error. The battle had not been of his choice. He was obliged to fight; and if it had not been for the steadiness, bravery, and discipline of the column which he sent forward to support the advanced divisions, he could never have escaped with an army. Would any gentleman look to the circumstances of that day's action—would any one look to its immediate consequences—would any one look to what was the state of the army at present, and say that a victory had been gained at Talavera? It was in truth no victory. It had been swelled into a victory only by the influence of political connection in order to get lord Wellington advanced to the peerage. It was a piece of ministerial foppery. It was an object with the right hon. gent. opposit\* (Mr. Canning), and his Majesty's ministers, to obtain the support of marquis Wellesley, and consequently they were anxious to pay court to that noble lord. He would congratulate, not the right hon. gent. (for he was no longer in office) but his Majesty's ministers, on having secured to themselves the support of that noble lord. But still he must contend, that it was with a view to pay court to him that lord Wellington had been advanced to the peerage; and that it was now proposed to add a pension to that honour. If they were to look to the history of the country for examples in which such honours and rewards were conferred, they would not find a single case of a peerage or a pension granted upon such disputable grounds. It was not his wish to detract from the merits or services of lord Wellington, either in India or in

Europe: but he did not think they were such as merited the distinctions conferred upon him. He was as ready as any gentleman to admit that lord Wellington was a brave, active, gallant and enterprising officer, that he had behaved very well in India. With his services in India, however, he was not sufficiently acquainted; but one thing he was sure of, that they had rewarded themselves; as there was commonly something behind much better than the mere remains of hard knocks, which were the only reward of many of those who achieved victories in Europe. But in the services performed by lord Wellington in Europe he could not discover any thing to merit the honours he had received, or the provision now proposed to be settled upon him, and his two next heirs in succession. With the grant of the peerage, that House had certainly nothing to do. He was sorry the title had been conferred, but for that there was now no remedy. That the thanks of that House had been voted to lord Wellington, was most true. But that such a vote should be advanced in support of the grant of a pension, excited his surprise. Did the right hon. gent. not remember the manner in which he had introduced the motion for that Vote of Thanks? Had he forgotten the cold and frigid manner in which he had prefaced that motion? The right hon. gent. was, perhaps, on that occasion not disposed to go further, though since he might have discovered something to quicken his feelings and make him warmer on the subject. For his part, he had not given any opposition to the Vote of Thanks. He had always thought that the conduct of lord Wellington in the battle of Talavera had been that of a brave, nay more, of a skilful and able officer, and for that reason it was that he had not opposed the Vote of Thanks. But was it, therefore, to follow that such distinguished honours should be conferred on so young an officer? What more could lord Wellington have received, if he had eminently distinguished himself in several campaigns, if he had grown old in arduous service like the late sir Ralph Abercrombie, and closed a life of professional labour in the arms of a signal victory? What had lord Nelson received for the glorious victory at Aboukir, which gave to this country the French fleet, and the army that had overrun Egypt? He would assert, without fear of contradiction, that if the victory of Aboukir had not been

gained, we should neither have destroyed the French fleet nor expelled the French army from Egypt. Yet what had that illustrious hero got for such a splendid victory, which led to such important consequences? He was made a baron, with a pension of 2,000*l.* a year.—He was ready to make allowance for the feelings by which gentlemen might be actuated on this subject; but setting aside those feelings, would any gentleman compare the services of lord Wellington with those of lord Nelson? Was it possible that such a comparison could be made, or could any man of sound mind and unimpaired faculties conceive any reason why the same rewards should be conferred for very dissimilar services?—The battle of Vimiera was, however, pressed into the cause, and made in part the ground of the intended grant. But had not that battle given to Junot and the French army the only chance they could have had of maintaining themselves in Portugal?—But it was said that this grant ought not to be resisted on the ground of a narrow economy. Under suitable circumstances, where great services might have been performed, even though the situation of the country was more embarrassed, he should never, upon any such paltry principle of economy, think of objecting to the grant of an adequate pension. But in all cases where the merit of the services was doubtful, he thought that maxims of public economy ought to be most particularly attended to. He was sorry the peerage had been granted; but as that House had nothing to do with that subject, he thought they ought not to add to it the pension. Ministers, instead of a pension, might have given to lord Wellington a lucrative military government; they might have given him one of those places of profit which were constantly becoming vacant, and ought to do so rather than take this pension from the purses of the people. But no; they had other claimants for such good things.—The right hon. gent. had indulged in some exultation because the former question had not been pressed to a division; but he doubted whether that right hon. gent. had much reason to triumph on the result of divisions. For his own part, he doubted much whether public opinion was with the right hon. gent. on that or the present occasion; but whatever might be the case now, he was convinced that it would not be with him a month hence, when the whole fruits of lord Wellington's

victories and campaigns would develop themselves to public view. He was sorry and alarmed to hear that lord Wellington had declared that he could defend Portugal with 50,000 men, provided 30,000 of them were British troops. All he knew was, that if the French were in earnest in their design upon Portugal, before three months lord Wellington and his army would be in England. Would to God they were in England at this moment! If Portugal were to be defended by him, he was afraid that they would have to deplore some such ruinous and bloody victories as that of Talavera, which would terminate in the loss of Portugal. Neither Portugal nor any other country could be defended by victories like that of Talavera.—Mr. Calcraft then adverted to certain inaccuracies in the dispatches of lord Wellington, particularly respecting the Spanish army, and contended that had not the Spaniards maintained their position on the right, our army must have been annihilated. Some of the Spanish troops had actually been engaged, as it appeared that they lost 1,200 men; and, therefore, to say that the British sustained the whole weight of double their own number, was a kind of Oriental style not consistent with British feelings. He allowed that the action on the Douro was a brilliant affair; but even in that there was room for much criticism.—On the whole, he did not think that any ground existed for the vote proposed. If lord Wellington should survive the scrapes into which he was constantly bringing his army, he might one day be entitled to distinction and rewards. If he had destroyed the French armies under Soult and Ney, what more could he have expected than what was now proposed to be done for him? Were the lives of the slain soldiers not to be considered? Lord Wellington engaged in a battle, in which he lost nearly a fourth of his army, and was compelled to make a disgraceful retreat leaving his wounded behind, and yet he was held up as a great military hero. That might be the opinion here; but he assured gentlemen it was not the general opinion elsewhere. They might vote pensions and thanks, but they could not permanently blind the country.

Mr. Robinson was never more surprised than he was, first, at the opposition to the Resolution, and next to the mode in which that opposition was made. When gentlemen had the speech of his noble friend (lord Castlereagh) fresh in their recol-

lection, and likewise the illustrations of two eminent general officers, and the manly, honest, and disinterested speech of the right hon. gent. opposite (Mr. Windham), the great friend of the army on all occasions, they could hardly have believed that statements would have been repeated which had then been so fully refuted. The opposition was made on the grounds of an invidious comparison between the merits of lord Wellington and those of other great military and naval heroes. He would not enter into these; but rest the case of lord Wellington on his own intrinsic merits. The hon. gent. had said, that many sentiments were uttered in that House, contrary to the common sense of the public. He admitted that, and referred to the hon. gent.'s speech as an instance. The hon. gent. had said, that if lord Wellington had closed a long life of service by a brilliant victory, as other officers had done, then he would have merited the same reward. But the argument was worth nothing, or rather it made against the hon. gentleman. Lord Wellington though young in years, was old in military glory. When posterity should look into the page of history, brightened with the names of Assaye, of Roleia, of Vimeira, of Douro, and of Talavera, they must look for their reward in the honours bestowed on the hero who led Britons to glorious victory on so many splendid occasions.—The hon. gent. had under-rated the action of the Douro. By the operation on that river, lord Wellington forced Soult into such a situation, that he must either have fought a battle on the most disadvantageous terms, or have retreated by a road by which it was impossible to carry with him his baggage, ammunition, waggons, cannon, &c. Soult was a good officer undoubtedly, and chose the latter alternative, but as had been foreseen, he lost his baggage, cannon, &c. &c.—He denied the insinuation, that the language in Lord Wellington's dispatches was exaggerated or inflated. If, instead of applying to the hon. gent. the House could apply to the British army, assembled in one body; if they could apply to the enemy; if they could apply to the people liberated, by the skill and ability of the noble lord, and the steady discipline and valour of his brave army; they would tell them that not a cannon, not a carriage, nothing that constituted an army, escaped from this brilliant achievement. Yet this was denied

to be a service, where the enemy fled with so much loss, that the roads were covered with his magazines, exploded; his mules, and beasts of burden, houghed or slaughtered; his carriages broken to pieces, and his men, who were unable to follow his army, left to be cruelly massacred by an enraged and justly exasperated peasantry. This was no service, no victory with the hon. gent., who, in the march from Talavera, could discover a retreat most disastrous and disgraceful.—The hon. gent. had then said, that the honours had been conferred, and that the pension was to follow, in compliance with the wishes of marquis Wellesley, and to secure his co-operation with the present ministry. But he asserted, without fear of contradiction, that if there was any man more anxious than another to confer honours and rewards upon lord Wellington, it was his noble friend (lord Castlereagh,) to whom the hon. gent.'s observations could not in the least apply. The honour and the reward had been deserved, and he would support the Resolution. He thought lord Wellington an honour to his country: he knew he was the boast of his contemporaries. Lord Wellington was honoured because he deserved honour, and he might say of him, as was finally said of Sir Ralph Abercromby, by lord Hutchinson, "His name is an honour to his country—it will meet the applause of his co-temporaries, and be embalmed in the recollection of a grateful posterity." Under these circumstances, he never in his life could give a vote with more pleasure than he would, this night, give it for a pension of 2,000*l.* to lord Wellington.

Mr. *Lyttleton* thought that his hon. friend (Mr. Calcraft) went too far in saying lord Wellington might in time become an excellent officer. He had unquestionably given most convincing proofs of his already being not only an excellent but a distinguished officer. He had not met in the course of his connections with a single military man who had not agreed that lord Wellington was a very distinguished military character. With respect to the affair of Talavera, was it nothing to have stopped the progress of a large French army? was it nothing to have gained such an advantage over an army of twice the number of his own? He thought the merit of lord Wellesley deserved every praise; but if it came to be compared with that of lord Nelson at the

battle of the Nile, the capture of the French fleet, and the consequent expulsion of the French from Egypt, the comparison must fall very far short indeed. Sir Ralph Abercromby finished his career of life by a splendid victory which had been rewarded by the grateful acknowledgments of his country to his posterity.—Lord Wellington had, he hoped, many years of fortunate ability and professional distinction to go on with; which would hereafter entitle him to the gratitude of his country. Much had been said in that House on the subject of party; he was willing to acknowledge he was a party man; he would always support a party whose conduct should be directed to the support of the vital interests of the country; but he thought nothing could, in the end, prove more injurious to those interests, than an unjust or merited distribution of national honours. He, for his own part, expected nothing from ministers; nor would he receive anything from them; and his earliest hope and wish were, that the House would compel them to do their duty to their country. Highly, however, as he admired and respected the military talents and character of lord Wellington, he could not give his assent to the present motion.

General Craufurd thought himself called upon to make a few observations. With respect to the operation on the Douro, lord Wellington had most judiciously pressed upon Soult, for the purpose of forcing him to fight on very disadvantageous terms, or to retreat with great loss, and his retreat was actually attended with the loss of his baggage, cannon, &c. and 5 or 6,000 men. His hon. friend (Mr. Calcraft) was under a complete mistake as to the real object of the operation. If lord Wellington had not pressed so hard upon Soult, the consequence would have been, not as his hon. friend imagined, the intercepting of Soult by general Beresford, but the allowing him to escape without any loss at all; for Soult was not so blind as to have remained in his position till general Beresford could have been prepared to intercept him. The consequences that followed lord Wellington's operation there, were equal to those that would have followed from a very considerable defeat of the enemy's army. As to the retreat from Talavera, he observed, that lord Wellington never intended to have advanced beyond Talavera till circumstances were changed or a decisive oppor-

tunity presented itself. He had taken up the position at Talavera, and had defended it successfully. Under no circumstances however, he must repeat, with Soult coming down as he did, could he have gone further; the Spanish army did not at that time advance to take a share in the action against Soult; but if Cuesta had kept his position, Soult must have been defeated. Cuesta had 14,000 men, and lord Wellington 18,000; then would have been not only the victory of Talavera, but the defeat of Soult. Lord Wellington had foreseen and provided for every thing that had happened during this arduous campaign. Lord Wellington had been adored in every country which had been the seat of war, and was it only in his own country he should be refused a reward? If the question of his great merits was put to the army, they would, in support of them, almost fall down and enthusiastically worship him. He deprecated the practice of undervaluing the campaign of lord Wellington by insidious comparisons with those of other great heroes, who stood in the list of British fame. He thought it was highly indignant. He was convinced, no action re-dounded more to the honour of the country than that of Talavera. Why, then, should not lord Wellington have this pension? It had been said, that he had served in India, and that was a profitable service. He did not, however, believe him to be a rich man. He believed that, as the hon. gent. (Mr. Calcraft) had said of lord Lake, he had many debts previous to his going to India, and what money he got there might have gone to pay these; so that he thought a peerage might be an incumbrance without a pension. Never did he more heartily concur in any vote than in this for 2,000*l.* a-year.

Mr. *Barham* considered the conduct of lord Wellington, in dashing precipitately forward into Spain, and being thence obliged to fight the battle of Talavera, as a contradiction to all the military principles set down in the history of the most military nations of the world. He was by no means inclined to estimate talent or services, by the direct success or failure of an object; but in viewing the battle of Talavera, he could not overlook that precipitancy in the commander, which made victory unprofitable, and must have made defeat total ruin: for when it was acknowledged, that the success at Talavera only led to consequent calamity, the

House must be aware that failure and defeat must have produced the annihilation of the British army. In the present instance, when reward for exploits was solicited, the House was bound to bear in mind, that the very term 'reward' comprehended both merit and success. Before this vote for a pension was acquiesced in, it was right to ascertain, whether lord Wellington, in his advance to Talavera, had acted in compliance with positive instructions, or not. Were the House in possession of that knowledge, it would then be able, when it praised for services, also to know whom to censure for such services being wholly unavailable to the interests of the country. Should the House forget what were its duties, the country would not fail to determine upon the merits or demerits of such transactions. And it was no very ordinary circumstance to observe that whilst the country from one extremity to the other was calling for inquiry, the organ which was to express its feelings were accumulating thanks, and honours, and pensions upon the parties engaged in those questionable occurrences. It was most improper to assume, that, merely because the crown conferred a peerage, therefore the House of Commons was necessarily bound to grant a pension? If such doctrine as that was to be brought into practice, then it must follow, either that the House of Commons must one time or other trench upon the prerogative of the Crown, or that the prerogative would destroy the best privileges of the Commons. The people in such a state would not fail to demand an account of all those indigested and calamitous plans in which the ministry involved them—plans, of the success of which no rational hope could be entertained, and for whose adoption there could be no other apology, but that they were undertaken by men anxious to compensate for their weakness by their multiplicity. The hon. member concluded by declaring his intention to oppose the motion.

Mr. *Herbert* estimated the value of the battle of Talavera by the impression it had made on the enemy, as expressed in the *Moniteur*. He was glad that lord Wellington had advanced into Spain; and therefore he could not but consider that blood as well shed which enhanced the reputation of the country, and belied the assertions of our enemy, uniformly cast upon this nation, of being wholly occupied

in promoting selfish objects. With respect to the retreat of our army after the battle of Talavera, it was to be recollected, that after the two most memorable victories in our history, namely, Agincourt and Dettingen, the British triumphant armies had retreated.

General *Loftus* bore testimony to the military talents of the noble lord. Valour, he was not inclined to account more than a common merit in such an army, and amongst such soldiers as ours; but skill, and discipline, and patience were to be found among the characteristics of this general. Lord Wellington, he believed also was far from rich; he had always been one of the most liberal men that ever existed, and the state of his circumstances was, he imagined, far from adequate to the support of the high dignity to which he was elevated.

Lord *Milton* said, that though the thanks of the House constituted one of the highest honours they could confer, they were now called on to give a further proof of their approbation. According to this doctrine, the king had nothing to do but to grant a peerage at his discretion, and then demand of the House to vote a pension. At the time this peerage was granted, the noble general had a near relation, high in office, and he supposed it was intended for the gratification of his feelings, as much as for the eminent services said to be performed, that title had been conferred. In former times, much greater services had been performed, and much less rewards granted; but he supposed these honours and rewards were granted rather for the purpose of shedding a lustre on the present administration, than for any very extraordinary merit in the conduct of the person to whom they were given. This was not his reason for opposing it; but seeing nothing in the conduct of lord Wellington, that, in his opinion, entitled him either to a peerage, or the thanks of that House, he would protest against voting him a pension of 2,000*l.* a-year, to be drawn out of the pockets of the people.

Sir *F. Burdett* said, that there was one circumstance, which, to him, appeared to render the vote, upon the present occasion, particularly objectionable; but, before he proceeded to state it, he should notice some observations that had fallen from an hon. friend of his, upon the subject of party. His hon. friend had declared himself favourable to party; and as it was generally attributed to him (sir



F. Burdett) that his ideas were different, he hoped he would be permitted to state, in the present instance, what his notions upon that subject were. He was not averse from party in all its shapes, though it had frequently fallen to his lot to disapprove of it, under different modifications, in which it was presented to his notice; party, founded upon public grounds, and with a view to public good, he approved of; it was calculated to benefit the country; but party, founded upon self-interest, and directed only to the attainment of place and pension, he would never approve of; it was calculated to ruin the country. That was the particular description of party of which he disapproved. The hon. member (Mr. Herbert) who had lately spoken, seemed to think that the battle of Talavera was important, only because it was calculated to do away the sarcastic injurious remarks of the French emperor; but he could not believe that the character of the country, or of its army, was, indeed, sunk so low, as to render the escape from sarcasm of such importance, as to compensate for the havoc of that day.—A comparison had been instituted between the battle of Talavera and the battles of Dettingen and Agincourt; but there was no resemblance whatever between them; besides, he did not hear that either of them was followed up by pensions. The battle of Agincourt was occasioned by the successful entrance of the British army into the French territories; and, though we retreated afterwards, it was a retreat in which much booty was carried off, and great glory was derived from the battle to the British name. In the present case, the advance was injudicious, the retreat was precipitate and confused; and, instead of bringing off booty, we had left our wounded behind us, to the mercy of the enemy. But an hon. gent. had mentioned the liberality of lord Wellington as a ground for agreeing to the motion; that surely could not be allowed to be a claim to the vote which ministers demanded. If lord Wellington's liberality had brought him into difficulty, or debt, who was it they called upon to free him from the incumbrance? The people—who already owed debts enough, and owed them, not in consequence of any profligality of their own, but by, and in consequence of, the impositions of their representatives. Surely, when such was the case, they ought to be cautious, that not a sixpence should be demanded, with-

out establishing the claim of a strong necessity. With respect to the military part of the question, he had no opinion; he could only say, that the result was failure,—failure as complete as failure could be.—The advance to attack was made upon the part of our general; the object was to drive back the French; instead of which, after, certainly, a splendid display of courage and bravery on the part of the British troops, our army retired itself. Might he not say with justice of this, that it was not one of those decisive victories which called for the honours and rewards in the gift of that House, and of the nation at large. But even if he was inclined to agree in the propriety of granting a reward to lord Wellington, he should object to making any appeal for that purpose to the people's purse. He wanted to know what was become of the patronage of the government? Whenever gentlemen talked of doing away sinecures and pensions altogether, the defence always was, that services must be rewarded, that the system of sinecures and pensions afforded a fund for that purpose, and who would take away a system so favourable to that reward? But as soon as services were performed, the application was made to the people, and not to that fund, which one would imagine, from the arguments of the gentlemen opposite, they were preserving for the reward of merit alone.—There was a place now or lately vacant, to which ministers might have appointed lord Wellington, that of governor of Portsmouth; there was, perhaps, another place at their disposal at that moment which he should then abstain from naming, but to which they might, perhaps, have appointed him. It was, indeed, wonderful, that, with greater means of rewarding merit, than all the combined merit and deserts of Europe could possibly exhaust, they were perpetually throwing the burden upon the people. For all these reasons, but principally for the last one, he should oppose the motion.

Mr. Fuller said, that the hon. baronet had given a strange reason for opposing the motion, that he knew nothing about military matters. He could not bear to hear, that one who had won fourteen battles, should be refused such a paltry consideration.—What would this country say—what would the common soldiers say—when they found that we made all this talk about conferring upon him the distinctions to which he was so eminently

entitled. Why should they talk about such things? Why should they oppose him, because his brother was a Secretary of State? He was sorry that any British subject should oppose a man, who was perhaps as great a hero as Belleisle, or any other that could be mentioned. An hon. gent. had said, that he sought no place; but if that hon. gent's abilities were observed, and considered to be useful, he would probably have no objection to be offered one. He would beg leave to give him a piece of advice, and that was, that if he spoke one way, and voted another, by G—d neither would employ him. (Loud laughing, and cries of order! order!)

Lord A. Hamilton did not mean to deny merit to lord Wellington, but he would say, that his merit was not of such a nature as to deserve such high honours. This was a question of a mixed nature, in part military, and in part prudential. If, upon investigation, it appeared that an officer had led his troops into difficulties, either by his own rashness, or in consequence of the advice of others, he could deserve no thanks for having extricated them. As to any authority or sanction, which the approbation of Ministers might be supposed to give to such an act, it should be remembered, that the ministers who approved of this operation were the very same ministers who had fired the Tower guns for the convention of Cintra. He would ask, and he thought it was only putting the question upon its right footing, could any one rejoice that the battle of Talavera had been fought? Appeals had been made to their liberality; but they ought to consider that it was not their own money they were disposing of, and however liberally they might be inclined to act, if such was the case, they ought to adopt a different policy in the present instance, when economy was their most pressing and important duty.

Lord Desart, spoke in very flattering terms of the military character of lord Wellington; in doing so, he said, he was certain that he spoke the sentiments of the army and even of the enemy himself. There were some persons, he was sure, in the country, who would be willing, not only to refuse to support the dignity now granted to lord Wellington, but even to pull down all that was dignified and important in the country. The merits of the person in whose favour they were now applied to, did not rest on one victory; he was not a mere adventurer in search of re-

putation, he had achieved great glory before ever he went to Spain: he had now received a high honour from his Sovereign, and he was certain that all would agree in the propriety of allowing him whatever was necessary to support the rank to which he was raised, unless such persons as were willing to reduce all dignity into a state of dependence upon their generosity. But not only had lord Wellington obtained repeated victories, he had obtained them all over superior numbers. Much had been said of rashness; that the undertaking of lord Wellington was difficult he admitted; but it was the characteristic of great minds to discern between difficulties and impossibilities, and that characteristic he had proved by the decisive success of the operation. The battle of Talavera was a great instance of military excellence, and as such should be marked with that distinguished notice with which it was the object of government to dignify it.

Mr. Whitbread complimented the noble lord on his eloquence, but complained of the manner in which he had treated all those who differed from him in opinion on the present question. The noble lord spoke of persons disgracing themselves by opposing this pension, and attributed gross ignorance, or wilful blindness, to those who could not view the subject in the same light as he did; and spoke of a party who were crying down every thing that was dignified and respectable in the land. He would state for himself, that he never did generally cry down the military talents of lord Wellington as a general, but, on the contrary, had often professed great respect for them; and upon another occasion, the battle of Vimiera, he had most cordially joined in the vote of thanks. As to the particular subject under discussion, so far from this being taken up as a party question, many of those with whom he was generally in the habit of acting warmly approved both of the vote of thanks and the pension now proposed. He must, however, observe, that the charges against members of that House for acting with the spirit of party, came with a very ill grace from so young a member as the noble lord, and more particularly when it was considered that he had begun his political career by accepting a place from ministers, and consequently binding himself to their party and politics. Upon the subject of party in general, he agreed in the opinion which had

been delivered by the hon. bart. (sir F. Burdett,) that it was right to act in concert with other men, for the attainment of any great public principles and objects; but at the same time that, in that sense of the word, he was content to be called a party man, yet when his duty obliged him to draw the line, he could detach himself from those with whom he was in general proud to concur. Another hon. gent. (Mr. Robinson,) had laid before the House the map of India and of Europe, and had led them from the north to the south, to witness the many achievements of the noble lord. He should, however, beg leave to bring them back again to the precise ground on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had chosen to take his stand, and that was the battle of Talavera itself. Independent of the question, respecting the merits upon that occasion, there was another very important consideration, and that was, whether even supposing the peerage merited, the circumstances of lord Wellington were such as to require this pension? If they were not, it would be a scandalous profusion and waste of the public money. It was the peerage and not the pension, which was supposed to be given as the reward of military merit. It did not necessarily follow, however, that whenever his Majesty was advised to grant a peerage to any officer, the House of Commons was also bound to vote him a pension. As he had happened to touch upon the honour of the peerage, he would ask the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, did he not know that the peerage had been very much prostituted and degraded of late years? Did he not know that it had been offered to barter for support to ministers? Had not he himself lately offered the highest honours of it for the support of a man (lord Melville) whom he could not introduce into office? On this present occasion, ministers had conferred a double peerage on lord Wellington; and yet the immortal Nelson, for the battle of Aboukir, was only created a baron. He believed every one would allow, that the battle of Aboukir was much more glorious and decisive than that at Talavera; and if the former services of lord Wellington were to be thrown into the scale, he would ask, had not lord Nelson also performed great services, before he had been selected by his merit to command on that occasion? Was he any more an adventurer for reputation at that time than lord Wellington

at Talavera? Had not he also achieved splendid exploits? Was not his shoulder, at that time, adorned with the red ribbon, and was not his body mutilated by honourable wounds received in his country's battles? Although the House could not controul the granting of peerages, still they were bound to controul the expenditure of the public money. In the case of earl St. Vincent, the pension was not given for a considerable time after the peerage; nor until it was ascertained that the circumstances of that noble lord were such as to require it. As to the situation of lord Wellington, there was nothing stated to the House which should induce them to presume that he was not able to support the honour of the Peerage. Had not he been to India, and in lucrative situations? If in his manner of living he had contracted debts which made him poor, he would agree with the hon. baronet (sir F. Burdett) in asking, has not the nation debts also? When this subject was brought before Parliament, they had two things to consider. The first was, whether the peerage was properly granted or not? and the second thing was, supposing that it had been properly granted, was the pension necessary or not? Now, as to the first point, he did think the peerage was not improperly granted; but that the double peerage was very improper. But even supposing the peerage was deserved, what occasion was there for coming to the people for money to support it? Had not the crown abundant means of rewarding services of this nature? Although he differed from many persons in his idea of the particular merits of the battle of Talavera, yet he thought highly of the general merits of lord Wellington as a soldier, and hoped that he would in future do services more important than those for which he was made a peer. He did not object to his being rewarded, but to the mode of rewarding him. What was the objection to the vacant government of Portsmouth being given to him? If it were said, that it was because he was liable to be sent out of the country, he would reply, that general Junot was governor of Paris at the time that he was fighting with lord Wellington in Portugal; and therefore there could be no serious objection to the governor of Paris being opposed by the governor of Portsmouth. There was another office, which it was very delicate to allude to; but which, as it had been already mentioned, and the circumstance was of

great notoriety, he must advert to. A valuable office (the Tellership of the Exchequer) was now said to be in the hands of the Crown. Whom was this office to be reserved for? Was it for any person who now felt uneasy in his seat, and wished a comfortable sinecure to retire upon? It was often said, that the expectation of one of those great places falling in satisfied many a claimant. If so, why should not lord Wellington wait for one of them? He felt it his duty, as a member of Parliament, to enquire into the circumstances of lord Wellington, and to say, that if they were sufficient to support the honour of the peerage, it would be a scandalous waste of the public money to grant him the pension. A gallant general had stated that lord Wellington had foreseen every thing which had happened. If that was the case, lord Wellington would have been an absolute madman. If he had foreseen that the French would have attacked him with a great superiority of force; that the Spaniards would not give him the support which might have been expected; that he should finally be obliged to retreat, leaving his sick and wounded in the power of the enemy; and yet, foreseeing these things, had resolved to place himself in that situation, what could then be said of the battle of Talavera? If he had, at the same time, foreseen the difficulties of his retreat, the loss of near 1,200 men in a month in the marshes of Estremadura, the long inactivity to which his army was doomed, and the advance of the French through Seville upon Cadiz, and yet resolved upon running all these risks and suffering all these losses, his conduct would be entitled to any thing but praise. There were some circumstances, however, in the conduct of lord Wellington which he could not approve. Although in his account of the battle of Talavera, he seemed to make no account of the Spaniards, yet in that same dispatch, mention was made no less than five times of Spanish troops charging with the British. He believed it was also a fact, that the Spaniards lost 1,200 men in the battle, which shewed, that they were not entirely idle.—It did, also, appear to detract a little from his greatness of mind to characterize sir Robert Wilson as merely a partizan. That officer had undoubtedly been extremely active, and had rendered most important service. He could have wished that he had never turned author, but he believed him to be an excellent

soldier. As to the military renown which our army had obtained at Talavera, he must say, that even military renown might be bought at too high a rate. We might even purchase gold too dear, and it was a pretty dear purchase to buy mere military renown with the loss of 5 or 6,000 men. The military character of this country was not so low as to require such sacrifices merely to shew that we can oppose the French. It appeared to him that lord Wellington had got his army into a prodigious scrape, and that they had brought him out of it most wonderfully. Lord Wellington was falsely described by many, as a persecuted man; he was, on the contrary, loaded with honours, esteemed and beloved by his army. In many respects he thought highly of the military character and talents of the noble lord, but he did not approve of his bringing his army into a situation when they were compelled to fight the battle of Talavera; and therefore he did not approve of the extravagant honours bestowed upon him on account of that battle, and he had already stated to the House the grounds upon which he felt it his duty to dissent from the pension.

Mr. Wellesley Pole said, that he had not intended to have taken any part in the discussion, but he felt it necessary for him to give some explanation on points which the hon. gent. had very properly inquired into. He must allow, that the hon. gent. had taken up the subject very fairly and manfully, and that, while he discharged his public duty, he had not spoken of the noble lord in any manner which could hurt the feelings of those who thought most highly of him. The hon. gent. had, however, given a military opinion of the military merits of his noble relation. Now, upon this subject he would only say, that he was content to rest the military fame of lord Wellington, on the opinion of the army in general, and on the opinion delivered in that House by a distinguished general, and the opinion formerly delivered in that House by a very gallant officer (gen. Ferguson), who had served under him. Resting then the military character of his noble relation on these grounds, he would say that he entirely agreed in the principle laid down by the hon. member, that, it did not follow that the House should grant a pension, although his Majesty had been advised to grant a peerage. He thought the hon. gent. was right in inquiring into

the circumstances of lord Wellington; and he would agree with him that it would be a shameful waste of the public money to grant a pension, if lord W. were in possession of means to support the dignity of the peerage without it. In the first place, he must state that lord W. never did expect, or seek for, a peerage. He had never, even in conversation with his nearest friends, hinted at such a prospect or suggested such a wish, and, therefore, when his majesty had been advised to raise him to that rank, he, as his nearest relation in England, had the awkward task of chusing a title, without any document or hint of what title his brother would prefer. Having stated that the peerage was thus conferred on his brother, without his seeking for it, he should now state what was the state of his circumstances, from a letter of his written to him after he had obtained the title. When he came from India, he had 42 or 43,000*l.* Of this sum he had now about 40,000*l.*, half of which, together with 6,000*l.* (her own fortune) was settled on lady Wellesley. The manner in which he made his money was as follows:—At the taking of Seringapatam, he got 5,000*l.* In the Mahrattah war 25,000*l.*—He also got 4,000*l.* from the court of directors for acting as civil commissioner in the Mysore, and about 2,000*l.* from government as arrears of pay, allowances, &c. These sums, with some interest, made the 43,000*l.* which he had brought from India, and of which he had not spent above 2 or 3,000*l.* since.

Mr. *Whitbread*, in explanation, said that he never intended to charge lord Wellington with having contracted debts with extravagance; he only argued hypothetically, as supposing such a case to exist.

Mr. *Pole* said, that it was in that manner and in that spirit only that he had supposed him to speak.

Mr. *Wilberforce* regretted extremely that the House should hesitate to accede to this proposition, or that any difference of opinion should have arisen respecting it. He would ask, whether it was possible that if lord Wellington had devoted the great talents which confessedly belonged to him to the profession of the bar, or to any other liberal pursuit in society, he would not have rendered them more productive—infinately more productive, than it appeared he had done by actively employing them in the service of his country? Could the country, then, be re-

conciled to that House if it acted illiberally towards such a man? Such illiberality would, he conceived, in the present situation of the world, not only be unjust but impolitic. He begged of those gentlemen who were so ready to profess themselves strong party men in general, although, on particular occasions, they thought proper to disclaim party, to get rid of party feelings upon this occasion, and consider the real merit of the question. Lord Wellington, instead of those professions in which there was little to risk and much to gain, had chosen the profession of arms, which was pregnant with risk, and which led alone to danger and to fame. That fame this gallant officer had obtained; but would that House, representing the country which he served, leave him to enjoy that fame accompanied by want? Was it possible that an example would be presented so degrading to the character of the country, and so injurious to its interests, calculated as it must be, to damp the spirit of that army upon whose ardour and zeal the country had to rely for its safety?—The House was bound even upon principles of consistency, to adopt the motion. It would ill become them to incur the imputation of being prodigal of their praise and parsimonious of their money. The honours which were bestowed on lord Wellington would be a downright burthen, if the liberality of the country, or the munificence of the sovereign, did not supply the means of wearing such honours with dignity. He had been informed by persons who were competent judges, that there was not living a more perfect soldier than lord Wellington. That gallant officer, he was assured, was as forward to share the fatigues as he was the dangers of the troops under his command. His comprehensive mind embraced every department of the army under his command. He was truly the soldiers' friend. He attended to their comforts; he provided for their necessities, and he gained their confidence without forfeiting the esteem of the officers.

Mr. *Lyttleton*, in explanation, declared, that he would never accept of a subordinate office, (A loud laugh!) A subordinate office, he would repeat, or any office under any administration, the principles and conduct of which he could not fully approve; a prospect which he thought very remote indeed.

Mr. *Henry Smith* had as high an opinion of the valour of lord Wellington, as any

other gentleman in that House; but he could not perceive how the battle of Talavera could be brought in competition with the great and glorious achievements obtained by lord Nelson and sir Ralph Abercromby. If the House did agree to the present question, he trusted they would bear in their consideration the death of gen. M'Kenzie, who fell in the battle of Talavera. He had hoped that the name of this great and meritorious officer would have been mentioned by some of the hon. gentlemen who had spoken before him. He had not brothers in the cabinet, and was forgotten; he was a soldier, without fortune, who had raised himself to the rank he held by merit. If the House were so lavish of their money, why not take into consideration the services of this brave and esteemed officer? He would take another opportunity of bringing the merits and claims of the relatives of this deceased meritorious officer before the House. He concluded by saying, that the proposition before the Committee should have his negative.

Mr. *Windham* said, that this was a question that was not identified with that which they had before under discussion, that of the thanks of the House to lord Wellington. It did not follow that these who approved of honours being paid to lord Wellington, should agree with the present proposition. He was not one of those who thought they should. He was convinced of the merit of the noble general, and those that wished to detract from it, had nothing to oppose against it, but uncertain demerit. The early part of his campaign was marked with great merit. It was an able and excellent arrangement to attack Soult, and from which that general could not have escaped, if it had not been by accident, and that of a nature lord Wellington could not have foreseen. Marshal Beresford was dispatched, with an efficient force, by a circuitous route, to attack Soult in the rear, which would have effectually cut off his whole army; if it was not also for an accident that could not be foreseen, by the standing of a bridge, which lord Wellington had reason to believe was destroyed. Capt. Ward, an officer distinguished for his services, and who had a perfect knowledge of the Portuguese language, having relatives and friends natives of that country, was sent forward for the purpose; but, when he reached there, the magistrates and populace would not allow him to

carry his orders into execution, and this officer, placed in a wood, had the mortification to see Marshal Soult retreating across the bridge, he intended to destroy; lord Wellington, surely, could not be answerable for the conduct of the Portuguese magistrates, or the populace. Was it not a victory to oblige a separate corps to retreat, and prevent them from joining and combining with the main army of Spain?—He again took the opportunity of assuring the House, that it was not on account of the demerits of the noble lord, that he opposed the proposition. He thought that it was false economy that would keep back the reward of valour, or of military achievements; but what greater honour could they have bestowed on the noble general, if he had, by the battle of Talavera, decided the fate of Spain? If they lavished their honours thus, and he was to take two steps more, the Court Calendar would not contain him. Some allusions had been made as to those honours conferred on lord Nelson. He was of opinion, that that great and valiant man was not sufficiently rewarded; but he did not look upon comparisons as the true mode of rewarding valorious deeds.

Mr. *Canning* said, on a former night he had the honour of following the right hon. gent. who had just sat down, and he perfectly approved of his arguments, but was sorry that on the present night he was obliged to hold a different opinion. He could conceive many cases in which the thanks of the House might be richly deserved and properly bestowed, but in which it would be improper they should be followed by hereditary rank. He should also conceive a case, in which it might be proper to confer honours, and yet to withhold what were called the more solid marks of favor. The question then however was, whether there was that value in the services of the noble lord to merit not only the thanks of that House, but also the pension which it was proposed to annex to the title his Majesty had conferred on him. In the course of the debate, comparisons had been frequently made between the battle of the Nile and the battle of Talavera. It had been asked, in a tone of triumph: why have you given two steps in the peerage to lord Wellington, when lord Nelson, for the proudest victory that adorns your naval annals, only obtained a barony? To this he would answer, that it was then, as it is now, his opinion that lord Nelson had not been

sufficiently rewarded on that occasion. He thought that lord Nelson deserved an higher honour; but he would not degrade the honours of lord Wellington, to meet the scanty portion which that noble admiral had obtained. Should the flag of France, which for years had not been able to look that of England in the face, by any hazard obtain a partial victory, or even offer a successful resistance, would the person at the head of the government of that country be blamed for exalting the admiral who should acquire it to a dukedom or principality, or any other transcendant dignity. Let the House consider, that it was only two years ago that it was said within those walls, that we could never meet France in the field with an army. The battles of Roleia and Vuniera—the operations against Soult—the glorious conflict at Talavera—disproved this imputation upon our valour and spirit. They had re-established our military character and retrieved the honour of the country, which was before in abeyance.—If the system of bestowing the peerage was to be entirely changed, and the House of Lords to be peopled only by the successors to hereditary honours, lord Wellington certainly would not be found there. But he would not do that noble body the injustice to suppose that it was a mere stagnant lake of collected honours, but that it was to be occasionally refreshed by fresh streams. It was the prerogative of the crown to confer the honour of the peerage; it was the duty of that House to give to honour independence. The question was, whether they would enable lord Wellington to take his seat with the proudest peer in the other House, or whether they would send him there with the avowed intention that it was only to the crown he was to look for support. It was their duty to take care if the crown made a peer, that it should not make a generation of peers wholly dependent on its favours for their support. If the war was to be prosecuted, we had a proud assurance in the talents and services of lord Wellington, and the bravery of our armies, that we were competent to contend with the enemy on his own element; if peace were to be established, we should come out of the war with the consciousness of having obtained not a partial triumph, as it was said, but complete and unqualified glory.

The question being loudly called for, the House divided. Ayes 213, Noes 106, Majority for the grant 107.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday February 19.*

[PRISONS IN IRELAND.] On the motion of Mr. W. Pole a correspondence was ordered to be laid before the House, respecting the state of the Irish prisons, which correspondence Mr. Pole immediately presented.

Mr. W. Pole then rose to make his promised motion on the state of the prisons and on the prison laws of Ireland. He observed that the report of the commissioners who had been appointed to investigate this subject, sufficiently shewed the lamentable state of the prisons in Dublin. It was shocking to humanity, that the evils detailed in that report had so long been permitted to exist without any steps having been taken to remove them. A considerable part of those evils originated in the crowded state of the prisons; a circumstance which arose from the accumulation in them of persons sentenced to transportation, but whom it had been found impossible to send to Botany Bay. By the correspondence just laid upon the table, it would however appear, that since the report to which he alluded had been made, the condition of the prisoners had been considerably ameliorated. The prison laws of Ireland were contained in 14 acts of parliament. It had been thought advisable to compress these into one. The subject had been referred to the consideration of the great law officers, and particularly to the Chief Justice of the Kings Bench, in Dublin, who was at present engaged in digesting a system of prison law, for the purpose of its being introduced into the bill, which he hoped the House would allow him to bring in. He concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the laws respecting prisons in Ireland, for the purpose of reenacting several of them, with amendments.

Mr. Foster seconded the motion.

Mr. M. Fitzgerald had intended to take up the subject, but he was glad that it would now be done more effectually; particularly as the chief justice had made the digest, that eminent individual being no less distinguished for his humanity than his legal knowledge. A penitentiary for prisoners merely he approved; but, he hoped, it was not intended as a prelude to the establishment there of the poor laws of England, than which nothing could be more injurious to all ranks of people in

Ireland. Leave was then given to bring in the bill.

[**ABUSES IN THE ADMIRALTY COURT.**]

Lord *Cochrane* rose, pursuant to notice, to move for several papers, with a view to expose abuses prevalent in the Admiralty Court. The proposition he was about to submit would be found worthy of the most serious attention of the House. Had the navy alone been concerned, he believed he should not have obtruded himself upon the House, as he might be considered as a person interested. The habits of his life would have prevented him from coming forward, except in cases where, he thought, the interests of his country were deeply involved; as there were many others more acquainted with the mode of conducting business in that House, to whom ordinary subjects might be left. But there were cases in which it was the duty of every man to come forward, and such a case he conceived the present to be. The interests, the dearest interests of his country, he considered as most materially involved in the event of the proposition he was about to bring forward. If the papers he intended to move for should be granted he would expose a system of abuse unparalleled in this country, beyond any thing that existed in Spain, under the administration of the Prince of Peace. Whether the subject was considered with a view to the saving of the sums of which the public was suffered; or with a view to the better performance of the duty: whether with a view to the destruction of the commerce carried on to so large an extent on the enemy's coast; or with a view to the encouragement and security of our own trade: whether with a view to the termination of the war by distressing the enemy; or to the terms on which we should be enabled to conclude a peace. In all these points of view this was a matter of primary importance; for in all these respects were the abuses of the Admiralty of the most injurious description. His lordship complained heavily of the monopoly of practice, which was in itself a principal abuse, and the cause of others, and maintained, that an immense saving might be produced by the correction of this and other abuses in the Admiralty Court. There were other minor abuses, which called for the attention of the House, by which the seamen of Greenwich Hospital were defrauded of their just claims. The droits of the Admiralty had been sometimes compromised for comparatively

small sums; and he mentioned an instance in which 32,000*l.* was given up in this way to a person at Liverpool, for 1,053*l.* This must have been by open injustice, or by favouritism; for he did not know of any law which authorised the Admiralty to compromise in this manner, where the interests of Greenwich Hospital and the captors were concerned. There was another abuse, which called loudly for a remedy. The captors were absolutely compelled to pay sums for the condemnation of vessels. This was the way in which they were often rewarded for their vigilance and valour. These things might be denied by the gentlemen on the other side, but they could not be disproved. He promised to prove them true, if the documents should be granted. It was not by denials of this kind, that these things were to be got over. Every man in that House was bound to decide upon his own judgment, and not on that of another; and he saw no reason to believe that there would be any more difficulty in counting the ayes and noes, if every one were to decide for himself, than there would be if gentlemen were to follow a leader. Could it be considered as at all consistent with common justice, that the whole navy of England should be obliged to employ a single individual to carry on its business before the Admiralty Court? A person, perhaps, in whose competency they might have no confidence; but allowing ability and integrity to be unquestionable, still the thing was preposterous. How would the gentleman on one side like to be obliged to employ an attorney, who, at the same time did business for the other side? Was this consistent with equity or common sense? The personal liberty of the officers of the navy were answerable for some seizures, the produce of which went, notwithstanding, to the crown, and the most abominable compromises sometimes took place. Whether the profits of these compromises found their way into the pockets of any particular individual, he was not absolutely sure, but he thought he had evidence to shew this to be the fact. He could not conceive what could be the design of confining the captors to one proctor, except that the secrecy so suited to these transactions, might thereby be better preserved. Vessels were sometimes condemned for the captors, upon their paying a sum commanded by the Admiralty Court, which ought not to have been condemned. There were other papers of great conse-



quence, beyond those of which he had given notice; and, if he could get these, he thought he could lay open a system of corruption such as never had been heard of, nor even conceived in this country—a sink of abuse such as never existed in Spain, even under the infamous Godoy, who betrayed his king, and was the cause of his being dethroned, far less under the Supreme Junta, which ministers seemed to have no disinclination to vilify. He had been in habits of intimacy with some of the members of the Junta, and he could take upon himself to say, that they were, at least, equal in ability to the ministers who now governed this country, if government it might be called. (Hear, hear!) The documents which he would move for, would not rest the matter upon two or three blundering cases. His object was to expose the general system, and to prove that corruption was at the head of it. He pledged himself to prove that the navy was paralysed by this corrupt system. He would shew, that the most trifling vessels were condemned at an expence equal to that of the largest—that the condemnation of a fishing boat might be swelled up to the expence of condemning an Indiaman, and that, consequently, in many cases, the captors had no other immediate interest in condemning, except that of putting money into the pockets of the proctor. He adverted to an instance in which one Moses Griffin, a Jew, an agent at one of the out-ports, had received two-thirds out of the produce of a vessel, the remaining third being the whole share distributed for admiral, captain, inferior officers, petty officers, seamen, and marines. He also adverted to a bill which had been brought in for establishing certain regulations in these proceedings, which was of no use whatever, but to bring more money into the Admiralty Court. Was it necessary to have 120 ships of the line in commission to blockade 23 ships of the enemy? Certainly not, if proper exertions were made. On this point an increase of pay would be of no use. To insure alacrity in harassing the commerce and shipping of the enemy, the abuses of the Admiralty Court must be done away. Nothing else could be effectual. The navy ought to have the largest share of that which was produced by its vigilance and valour. This was the proper mode of proceeding, and no other would completely answer the purpose. His lordship

then mentioned, that he himself had captured 13 vessels laden with corn, for Barcelona, protected by two small ships of war, which were sunk. If he had taken these, and carried them into Malta, and got them condemned, he must have put his hand in his pocket and paid for it. Perhaps he spoke more warmly on this subject from the opportunities he had of being acquainted with these abuses—but not only the navy was injured by these abuses, but the country also. His lordship then adverted to a regulation, by which six privateers, if taken within three months of each other, were to be included in one libel for condemnation: a regulation perfectly futile, and a mere tumbag upon the navy and the country. His lordship next stated, that the commerce of the enemy was carried on to an immense amount by our licences, which were an article of common sale in Hamburgh and other places. The enemy's ships were seen by hundreds, coasting along by means of these licences, in perfect security, and even filled the river Thames, contrary to the Navigation Act: thus raising sailors for Napoleon, to whose commerce and navy our ministers were the best friends. He concluded by moving for a Copy of the Agent's Accounts from the Registrar's Office, for a certain period, respecting a number of ships which his lordship specified; together with several other papers. He would call the attention of the House to the subject of Greenwich Hospital at another opportunity.

Sir W. Scott asked how the Court of Admiralty could possibly be answerable for such accounts of the agents? What ground could there be then for the indiscriminate charge made by the noble lord? And yet the contents of papers or accounts for which the Court of Admiralty could not be held responsible, had been the ground on which the noble lord founded all his invective. The noble lord was a prompt accuser. He had been an accuser not alone of individuals, but an accuser of courts of justice. He had, however, been an unfortunate accuser; and he (sir W. Scott) pledged himself, by all the credit which he might have obtained during the many years that he had sat in that House, that the noble lord would prove as unfortunate in this accusation as in any preceding one.

Mr. Rose would assure the noble lord and the House, that no man was more dis-

posed than himself to agree to the production of any papers by which the interests of the Navy might be benefited. He was satisfied, however, that when the papers moved for should be produced, the conduct of the High Court of Admiralty would be found most unobjectionable. The noble lord had poured out a torrent of abuse most unprecedented on a motion for papers only, and before the House had the documents before them that could enable it to form a correct judgment upon the subject. This was a subject which he had investigated with a care and attention for which he supposed the noble lord would not give him credit. He had bestowed upon it many days and many nights, and he was convinced that if the noble lord were to succeed in throwing abroad into other hands the business which was now confined to the King's Proctor, he would extremely injure the interests of the Navy, depreciate the character of the country, unnecessarily annoy the neutral trader, and very much embarrass the British merchant. He defied the noble lord to find a single instance in which the charges made by the King's Proctor were higher than those which would have been made by any other Proctor in Doctors' Commons. As to Agents' accounts, it certainly did happen, that after those accounts were made up, Naval officers seldom took any trouble to examine them. Soon after he became Treasurer of the Navy, it had been strongly represented to him that many abuses existed in this respect. He had consequently inquired into the subject, and had had no less than 153 of these cases before him, nine of which were now before the Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, in consequence of the enormous charges which the accounts contained. In one case, the charges of an Agent at Portsmouth, who had 62,000*l.* to distribute, amounted to 9,462*l.* of which sum 1,200*l.* was stated to be for postage! In another instance, 1,250*l.* had been charged by an agent when not a shilling had been paid. Large sums too were kept in hand by these agents for many years, the accumulated interest of which was lost to the rightful owners. Feeling sensibly that the navy suffered deeply for want of somebody to look to their interests, he had after the last session of Parliament proposed that a person should be appointed for that purpose. He did not wish that a place should be created,

but a gentleman who had made the business his study having written to him, and having been very respectably recommended, particularly by two hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, he had accepted that gentleman's services, and he was now going through the cases in the most satisfactory manner. With respect to the seamen, he (Mr. Rose) had completely succeeded in getting justice secured to them. Since the Act of the last session only one complaint had been made to him by a sailor of his having been cheated by his agent. A suit was in consequence instituted against the agent, and out of the penalty the sailor had got his money. In the investigation of the cases to which he alluded, although there were many exceptionable charges, the law charges were lower than those of the Proctors employed by privateers. He had read a pamphlet on the subject of the noble lord's speech, and he declared, that after making all possible inquiry, he was satisfied that not a single statement in that pamphlet was founded in truth. He regretted that the noble lord, instead of making a desultory complaint of abuse, had not put his finger on a single case where he would have found him (Mr. R.) as ready as himself to bring it under the consideration of the House.

Mr. Stephen rose to enter his protest against the speech of the noble lord. He would ask of the House whether it was proper, upon a mere motion for papers, to enter into a wide and unrestricted animadversion upon public characters, as if they were actually under an impeachment, without the regular institution of any charge against them, or any evidence which the accuser himself had taken the trouble to examine. If the noble lord was desirous of preferring a charge against the Court of Admiralty, he should have first maturely considered the nature of the allegation he was about to make, and of the information he should ask for, in order to elucidate the facts he had to urge. The papers for which the noble lord moved, would contain more matter than the whole Report of the Committee of Inquiry on the Scheldt Expedition; and while these immense piles of information remained unread, the characters of public men might labour under the effects of this unprecedented attack. If he understood the noble lord right, he did not mean to pledge himself that the papers for which he had moved, would at all

bear him out in imputing any thing criminal to the Judge of the Admiralty Court, or any other person; yet if the papers were refused, in all probability their non-production would be quoted as a reason for his lordship being precluded from making good his assertions. The noble lord had allowed that he had not examined nor had time to examine them, and yet he built on them an accusation against the officers of the High Court of Admiralty of corruption, and a sacrifice of the interests of the navy. The papers were to be produced just to give a chance that there might, by extreme possibility, be something in them to justify the accusation. He (Mr. Stephen) would not affront the high characters so wantonly calumniated—characters respected, not alone by this country, but by the civilized world, for their talents and integrity—he would not affront such characters by becoming their apologist, in answer to such an attack as this. The noble lord was a distinguished ornament of his profession; for his part, he confessed that he would rather hear of him than hear him, and that he would rather read a report of his actions in his commander's letters in the gazette than a report of his speeches in the House of Commons or elsewhere in the columns of a newspaper. The House ought at all times to respect the liberty of speech; but the speech of the noble lord was completely an abuse of that liberty. He had got up, and in the most unqualified manner attacked the characters of individuals, declaring at the same time that he had not examined the sources which were to confirm his accusations. Much as the noble lord knew of the navy he could not believe that he appreciated the character of that gallant class of men justly, when he declared that if the fees of the Court of Admiralty were diminished the hundred sail of the line now employed might be reduced to forty, or when he intimated that they required any other stimulus to exertion than their sense of public duty. Adverting to the attack made by the noble lord upon a learned friend of his, who was judge of the Vice Court of Admiralty, at Malta, he defended the conduct of his learned friend, in the case alluded to, which Mr. S. was able from memory to explain. That judge had condemned the noble lord to pay costs, but under circumstances which justified such a sentence, and shewed the conduct of the learned judge to be as free from blame

as that of the other high and respectable characters who had incurred the censure of the noble lord.

Sir C. Pole said, that amongst the charges promulgated in the book alluded to by the right hon. gent. on the opposite side of the House, it was positively asserted that 30 per cent. was charged for the condemnation of a prize; and also, that an officer commanding a frigate, who had taken a prize, and who had objected to pay this exorbitant demand, was told by the proctor, if he did not pay the sum demanded, the ship would be condemned as a *droit* of Admiralty to the King. When such charges as these went forth, it was highly important to the interests of the public, and he should therefore ask the House if it was not necessary the subject should be looked into, the papers produced, and the calumnies (if such they were) refuted? The King's proctor, in the case of Copenhagen, was first employed by the captors, who had sent in 200 sail of merchant vessels to the ports of England, previous to the commencement of hostilities, and in order to enable him to prove that the ships belonged to the enemy, all the necessary papers were transmitted. In the course of a few days however, hostilities commenced, and the property was declared to belong to the Danes, and in the course of three days, was given by the Admiralty Court to the King as a *droit*. Under such complicated circumstances, the argument that only one proctor should be employed, was ridiculous, as one man would be advocating the cause of two individuals, of opposite interests, at the same time. He hoped the noble lord would persevere in moving for the papers, but confine himself as much as possible to those documents which were most easily furnished, and most likely to attain the object he had in view.

Mr. Rose had a proposition to make. Though he objected to the production of the papers relating to the whole of the ships named in the motion, if the noble lord would move for those relating to any one of them, he should have no objection to the motion, and he thought to bring forward any one case would be quite as fair, but less inconvenient, than the whole.

Sir J. Nichols, alluding to the pamphlet that had been mentioned, said it contained gross and palpable misstatements. The emoluments of the King's advocates were therein stated to amount to from 25,000*l*.

to 30,000*l.* per annum. Such unfounded reports going abroad, could not fail to excite discontent among the people, and dissatisfaction in the navy. The whole of the emoluments of the King's advocate did not exceed 7,000*l.* per annum; and a large portion of that did not arise from the navy, but from business for the crown relating to the excise, customs, &c. So that he thought he should be pretty nearly correct if he were to state the amount of his emoluments arising from the navy at 4,000*l.* But if the income arising from matters relating to the navy were as great as the sum he had first named, it would hardly be thought too much, when it was considered that great abilities were necessary in the person holding the situation, when vigilance, assiduity, and method were requisite, and the most unremitting attention of mind, while at the same time a great responsibility was incurred. The gross misrepresentation in this instance contained in the book alluded to, was sufficient to enable them to form some judgment of the other parts of it and he could take upon himself to say, that in no instance did it approach so near to the truth as it did in that. The King's proctor received no emolument but what he officially received from the board. It was a singular circumstance, but not more singular than true, that his fees were actually less than they were in the American war. The charges of the King's proctor were not greater than those of any other proctor, and he did not think they ought to be; he ought to act with liberality; but, admitting his charges were exorbitant, the course the aggrieved party ought to pursue was obvious. Why not appeal to the judge? The omission to adopt this remedy was a pretty strong proof of the non-existence of the abuse. Government certainly ought at all events to indemnify those who captured the vessels.—He then went into a detail of the circumstances under which 30 per cent. was granted from the captors for the condemnation of prizes. A number of vessels had been detained. They were under Prussian colours, and no means were possessed of proving they belonged to the enemy, when a person abroad offered to prove that they did. The party was directed to appear with his documents to prove the fact. He did so, his proofs were satisfactory, and the vessels were condemned. He claimed an allowance of 30 per cent. for his services. It was thought advisable to keep on good terms with him,

at all events, as otherwise no further information could be expected from that quarter, his demand was complied with. How could they do better for the captors? had they not availed themselves of his services, they could not have gained for the captors the 70 per cent. they received, as they could not have proved that the vessels in question were not neutral but enemy's property. Nothing could be more injurious to the interests of the navy itself, than permission to the captors of ships to choose their own proctor, and nothing could be more fatal to the commercial interests of the country. The judge advocate on such occasions had not the power of influencing or of keeping back evidence, nor had he an interest either way. It was no matter to him to whom the prizes were condemned. Lest the court should have an improper bias in favour of the Crown, the papers were given to the junior advocate, who, if his interference became necessary, spoke in behalf of the captors. He concluded by desiring the noble lord to look carefully over the documents relating to the subject, before he preferred a charge so serious against any one, as after being accused (however honourably the party might be acquitted) no character stood so high as before accusation.

Lord *Cochrane*, in reply, said he only wished the act of parliament on the subject to be complied with. If other proctors were as exorbitant in their demands as the king's, it was because their situation, in consequence of what the other exclusively enjoyed, obliged them to be so. The only way ministers had left to them to justify those he had accused was to shew that the charges he had brought forward were unfounded. He had taken 180 pipes of wine, for which he received 450*l.* He bought in 16 of them, and paid 67*l.* duty on them. If proper encouragement were given a much greater number of prizes would be sent in. At present the commerce of France was almost uninterrupted. The cause originated in the admiralty Court. Our navy cost us annually twenty millions. Six might be saved, and the commerce of France destroyed. He expected that the gentleman opposite would defend such abuses, but from their known abilities he expected they would defend them better than they did. The King's proctor did not receive less than 40,000*l.* per annum: he did not think it right that he should receive more than the Speaker did for sitting in the chair of that House.

The noble lord then justified his conduct at Malta, and concluded by enforcing his former arguments.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, thought bringing forward one of the cases would answer every purpose. If there were a distinction of cases he could bring forward two. It would be better than encumbering the House with the whole. He was anxious the calumnies should be met and refuted, but wished the noble lord would seek better information than that contained in the book alluded to. As the falsehood of that work in some parts had been shewn, he hoped the noble lord would be careful what credit he gave to the rest of it.

Mr. *Fremantle* was of opinion the noble lord would have done well to have corrected himself with respect to the income of the King's proctor. The noble lord had said it amounted to 40,000*l.* a year: if he inspected the report delivered into the Committee of Finance, he would find it did not exceed 7 or 8,000*l.*

Lord *Cochrane* agreed to the proposition of the right hon. gent. and accordingly moved for documents relating to two of the vessels named in the original motion.

[BREACH OF PRIVILEGE.—J. DEAN.] Mr. *Yorke* rose to call the attention of the House to what he thought a gross violation of their privileges. If it should appear to the House as it did to him he was persuaded that no opposition would be made to his motion. Either those privileges existed, or they did not. If they did exist, it was the bounden duty of that House to defend them from those gross and wanton attacks, which not only invaded them but went in a great degree to question, whether they had such privileges or not. The attack, of which he now complained, was not a mere newspaper paragraph, it was a placard stuck upon the walls of the metropolis, challenging the eye of the passenger, and openly defying all consequences. A grosser breach of privilege than the matter contained in that placard, he could not readily imagine; but before he would read to the House the contents of that paper, which he then held in his hand, he could not help making one observation. If that House had privileges to maintain, he thought in his heart it was now high time to assert them. If that House should not take steps speedily to vindicate their privileges which were daily and hourly violated, they would be supposed not to possess them or to want spirit to assert them. He, though the authors of the

placard did him the honour of mentioning his name, was not influenced by personal considerations; and he felt confident, that the House would do him the justice to believe, that he was influenced, in the present instance, solely by a sense of public duty.—For the liberty that had been taken with his name, by these persons, he felt nothing but the most profound contempt.—The placard to which he alluded, was headed with the names of a right hon. gent. opposite (Mr. Windham), and himself. He must be at all times proud to have his name coupled with that of the right hon. gent. and so far he must acknowledge himself indebted to the authors of the paper in question. As to the objectionable matter contained in that paper, he should merely read it to the House, and leave it to their consideration without any comment. This same placard, which announced itself as the journal of a sort of speaking club, called "The British Forum," stated to the public, that "Last Monday, after an interesting discussion, it was unanimously decided, that the enforcement of the standing orders, by shutting out strangers from the gallery of the House of Commons, ought to be censured as an insidious and ill-timed attack upon the liberty of the press, as tending to aggravate the discontents of the people, and to render their representatives objects of jealous suspicion." Here they had their most valued privileges attacked at once, their standing orders were censured, and they themselves were menaced; for the question upon the propriety of enforcing those orders had been recently before the House, and the propriety of that proceeding was confirmed by a very considerable majority. He had been bred up in those habits of veneration for the constitution, that he must of necessity revere the liberty of the press as one of the most efficient guardians of that constitution. But he thought that the liberty of the press had no more formidable enemy than the licentiousness of the press, and as a sincere and zealous advocate for the former, he trusted he should never be wanting in his efforts to punish and restrain the latter. His first proposition would be, to deliver in the paper at the table; next, that it should be read by the clerk, and that the clause in the Bill of Rights relative to the privilege of freedom of debate, should be also read; and lastly, he should move that the printer should be required to attend at the bar of

the House to-morrow. Mr. Yorke then delivered in the paper, which was read by the clerk, and was as follows:—

“WINDHAM AND YORKE. BRITISH FORUM, 33, BEDFORD-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN. MONDAY, FEB. 19, 1810. Question:—Which was a greater outrage upon the public feeling, Mr. Yorke’s enforcement of the standing order to exclude strangers from the House of Commons, on Mr. Windham’s recent attack upon the liberty of the press? Last Monday” [for the rest of this clause see the former part of Mr. Yorke’s speech] “The great anxiety manifested by the public at this critical period to become acquainted with the proceedings of the House of Commons, and to ascertain who were the authors and promoters of the late calamitous expedition to the Scheldt, together with the violent attacks made by Mr. Windham on the newspaper reporters (whom he represents as ‘bankrupts, lottery office keepers, footmen, and decayed tradesmen,’) have stirred up the public feeling, and excited universal attention. The present question is therefore brought forward as a comparative inquiry, and may be justly expected to furnish a contested and interesting debate. Printed by J. Dean, 57, Wardour-street.” Mr. Yorke next moved, that that clause of the bill of rights, affecting privilege of speech in that House, be now read. It was read accordingly, stating, in substance, that the speeches or debates of members in that House, ought not to be impeached or questioned by any authority or in any place out of that House.—Mr. Yorke then moved, that J. Dean, printer, 57 Wardour-street, do attend at the bar of that House, to-morrow.—Ordered.

[EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.] The order of the day being moved, for going into a Committee of inquiry respecting the Expedition to the Scheldt.

Lord Folkestone strongly recommended the propriety of devising some means to promote dispatch in the progress of this inquiry. From the length of time to which it had already extended, and from the manner in which it languished, he was really at a loss to calculate upon the period of its termination, unless there should be considerably more of diligence and activity employed than had yet appeared; unless more of the time of the House were devoted to it. With this view he would propose that the enquiry should take pre-

cedency of all notices of motion, or that the House should proceed upon this inquiry at an earlier hour of the day than that at which they usually commenced business. The latter course he would himself be disposed to prefer. But there was a subject of much more consequence to which he thought it his duty, upon this occasion, to call the attention of the House. Amongst the papers on the table he found a most extraordinary letter referring to the matter of this inquiry. He confessed that when this letter was originally moved for, he felt strong doubt as to the regularity of the motion and the propriety of producing it, but upon further consideration, that doubt was removed, and he now had no hesitation in declaring his decided opinion, that it was such a document as that House ought not to receive or allow to remain on the table. For what did this paper purport to be—a Narrative of the Expedition to the Scheldt, signed by lord Chatham, and presented to his Majesty without the intervention of any responsible minister—There were therefore several points connected with this paper which appeared to demand explanation. How did the House know that it was a true copy of the document said to have been presented to his Majesty? Through what office had it passed; for it did not bear the signature of any official person; and by what accident did it come into the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by whom it had been laid on the table? Another remarkable feature about it was this, that although it was two or three months ago announced in the newspapers, known, or supposed, to have some understanding with the ministry, that lord Chatham had presented a Narrative of this description to his Majesty; yet, the paper to which he now referred bore date only upon the 14th inst. But his main objection to this paper was of a constitutional character—Lord Chatham had, it appeared, not in his character of a peer, or privy counsellor, but, in that of a military commander, presented to the King in person, an account of his military proceedings, although directed, under the sign manual, by which he was appointed, to make such communications through the proper officer, the Secretary of State, whom the constitution recognized. This account too, had been brought before that House in a most unconstitutional, irregular, and questionable shape. This paper seeming to have been presented to his Majesty in his private

closet, he could not know through what officer it found its way to that House. It might contain very important matter, and it might be proper to have it laid upon the table, but from the irregularity which he had remarked about it and in its mode of introduction to that House, he thought it right to submit his opinion to the consideration of the House.

Mr. *Canning* apprehended, if he was correct in what he had collected from the noble lord's statement, that the paper to which the noble lord referred was not presented through any official minister, but personally to his Majesty. If so, it was a question well worthy of grave and deliberate consideration, whether the objection applying to the form in which the paper was brought before that House, was not such as could not be removed, or qualified by the substance of that paper, whatever that substance might be. He should suppose that all orders from that House, relative to public documents, were addressed to some responsible minister, who was officially answerable for their production; and that all papers of the nature of that under consideration were generally presented to his Majesty through some responsible minister. Great inconveniences, indeed, must obviously result from a different course. But the error, in point of form, with respect to the production of this paper to that House, might, he thought, be easily corrected. To avoid going into any mixed consideration of the form objected to, and the substance of this paper, the simple course was, to correct the form before the paper was read. That course was by withdrawing the paper, and presenting it in a regular way, stating whether the document, of which it purported to be a copy, was presented to his Majesty by the Secretary of State for the war department, or by the noble lord whose signature it bore; and in what capacity, whether as a cabinet minister, or as the Commander in Chief of the Expedition of which it professed to be a Narrative. This line of conduct he humbly submitted to the consideration of the House, as in his judgment, their becoming acquainted with the contents of the paper might, instead of simplifying, tend to make the business more complex than it would otherwise be. The course he proposed appeared therefore to him to be a simple remedy by which they might avoid inconveniences of considerable magnitude.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* con-

curred with his right hon. friend who spoke last, as to the propriety of avoiding any mixture of the form and substance of this paper. It was rather unfortunate, however, he observed, that the doubts urged on this occasion had not been mentioned at the time this paper was moved for, in order to its being laid on the table. Notice was regularly given of the intention to move for it; and at the time of the notice, as well as on the bringing forward of the motion, the nature of the paper was fully described; and at neither period did any of those objections occur which were now pressed, and pressed rather too late in his judgment. As to the manner in which he had obtained this paper, he would state shortly. In compliance with the order of that House, to which, of course, it was his duty to attend, he instituted an inquiry as to where this paper was, and found it to be in the hands of the Secretary of State for the war department, lord Liverpool, to whom it was delivered by his Majesty. From lord Liverpool he received the copy which he had laid on the table, and so far he felt himself answerable for its production.

Mr. *Canning* agreed with his right hon. friend, that the objection applying to form upon this subject would have been more in time if brought forward before, adding, that he remembered it to have been in contemplation, before he resigned his place in the cabinet, to call upon the naval and military commanders for an account of the proceedings of the campaign. Therefore, the papers before the House being dated only upon the 14th instant, it was calculated to excite some surprise in his mind to see that account come so late.

General *Loft* had no intention of taking the House by surprise, on the contrary, he had given notice of the motion for producing the paper.

The Paper was here read by the Clerk, it was entitled, "Copy of the Earl of Chatham's Statement of his Proceedings, dated 15th October, 1809: Presented to the King, 14th February, 1810:" and will be found in the Appendix.

Lord *Folkestone* declared, that the objections which he felt to this paper, were considerably aggravated by a knowledge of its contents. It now appeared to be a special address from the commander of one part of the Expedition, appealing to the judgment of his Majesty without the intervention of any responsible minister,

and actually reflecting upon the conduct of his colleague in the command. He really did not know how the House should proceed to get rid of such a paper; but it seemed highly desirable that it should do so. To entertain such a document would be not only inconsistent with the constitution; but, in his opinion, with common justice. He was sorry the hon. member had called for its production, and he was sorry also that the right hon. gent. had produced it, because the paper had found its way to the royal presence in a most unconstitutional manner, and for which no minister was responsible. The noble lord would be glad to hear from the chair in what manner it could be disposed of.

Mr. *Yorke* thought the proper time for discussing the question would have been when the motion was made for referring the papers to the Committee. He could not see any objection to its being so referred. The noble lord had found fault with the manner in which the paper had been presented to the House, but he would ask, did not the House call for it by their unanimous vote? With respect to the manner in which the paper was conveyed to the royal presence, my lord Chatham, in his opinion, could not have done less than what he did, for at the time the paper was written, he believed there was no Secretary of State for the war department. (Hear! hear! from the Opposition side; and, What not on the 14th of February?) The right hon. gent. then admitted his mistake. But he would ask, what was there unconstitutional if the paper was presented in the regular way to the King by a cabinet minister, who was also Master General of Ordnance, and a peer of the realm? If ministers had laid the papers on the table uncalled for, then indeed gentlemen might talk of its being presented unconstitutionally (Hear! hear!) The right hon. gent. declared that he did not know what gentlemen meant by the exclamation of hear! hear! If they meant that he did not understand the constitution of his country, they were deceived. If they meant more, why then no expressions of scorn and disdain that he could use to repel such insinuations would be strong enough. (Hear! hear!)

Mr. *Tierney* declared, he must expect to come in for his share of his right hon. friend's scorn and disdain, for he certainly should contend, that not only was the paper introduced into the royal presence

unconstitutionally, but, as the House must have gathered from its contents, the character of the navy had been clandestinely undermined. He wished to know how it came into the possession of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? (From lord Liverpool's office, was the answer across the table.) Was, then, lord Liverpool the carrier of the paper? If so, degraded indeed was the situation to which the noble lord was reduced, and no terms could express sufficiently strong the humiliation of ministers. Had the paper in question been presented in the ordinary and constitutional mode, through the Secretary of State for the war department, with whom alone the noble earl was directed, by his instructions, to correspond, it would, no doubt, have been communicated, by ministers, to the first lord of the Admiralty, who would have felt it equally his duty to have communicated its contents to sir Richard Strachan, and have apprized him that he was to be incriminated by the commander in chief of the land part of the armament for the failure of the Expedition, and the gallant admiral would thus be enabled to justify his character and conduct to his Sovereign and his country. But this secret practice of poisoning the royal breast with doubts and suspicions of his most approved and zealous servants, while it deprived them of the knowledge, and, of course, the means of repelling them, merited, in his opinion, impeachment. He trusted that the paper, though objectionable, and, therefore, inadmissible for its present object, would be forthcoming on a future day for that purpose. For his part he had no proposition to offer upon the present occasion, but he trusted, the House would come to some resolution, conveying, in the strongest terms of censure, their disapprobation of the conduct of ministers.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* contended, that there was no one circumstance connected with this paper for which there was not an adequate responsibility. If there was any thing culpable in the character or construction of the paper, was not lord Chatham responsible for it, and was not he himself responsible for the production of the copy to that House? Why then, what could be pointed out that was in any degree unconstitutional in the whole proceedings? Had not lord Chatham or any other individual a right to lay a paper before his Majesty? Nay, had not any peer or privy counsellor a right to



demand an audience of his Majesty? Then where was the unconstitutionality complained of in this transaction? As to the allusion which the last speaker had thought proper to make to impeachment, that he regarded merely as a bye word. He could assure the right hon. gent. and others, that neither in that House, nor out, would such allusions tend in any degree to promote the object which they had in view, in prosecuting this inquiry.

Mr. Ponsonby was decidedly of opinion, that the proceeding under discussion was extremely unconstitutional. (A laugh on the ministerial benches.) This laugh was perfectly natural from those who were every day in the habit of treating the constitution with contempt. But what could be conceived more unconstitutional or unfair, than that of a military commander going into the king's closet, without the knowledge of any minister, and presenting his majesty a paper justificatory of his own conduct, and criminatory of the conduct of his naval colleague? If such a paper had been in the regular way presented through a responsible minister, it would be by him, as was his duty, submitted to the consideration of his colleagues, who, if they did their duty, would not present it to his Majesty, at least, without apprizing sir Richard Strachan of its contents, and affording him an opportunity to defend himself. What, he would ask, was the course likely to be pursued by the first lord of the admiralty upon such a consultation? He hoped that no man on either side of the House could have a doubt that lord Mulgrave would have immediately communicated with sir Richard Strachan upon the subject of such a paper. If, then, the present case was to serve as a precedent, every man might do what lord Chatham had done, and there was an end of the responsibility of ministers. He submitted it to the wisdom of the Speaker, if any paper of this kind ought to go to the king, save through the constitutional organ? By the constitution, the king could not see a minister on his return from a foreign court, but in the presence of his secretary for foreign affairs; and he appealed to the right hon. gent. (Mr. Canning) if an interview of that description had been advised, while he held the office, whether he would not have resigned? Why, then, should the commander of an expedition on his return have the privilege of going into his Majesty's closet secretly to asperse the character of

the other officers associated with him in the expedition? Why should he communicate with his Majesty upon such a subject but through the constitutional channel, the office of the secretary of state? But it was said his Majesty had delivered the narrative to lord Liverpool. He would presume that his Majesty had read and formed an opinion on it. His cabinet might hold an opinion directly the reverse, either that the army or that the navy was to blame. What, then, would be the consequence, if the cabinet had to advise their sovereign directly against the opinion they knew he had formed? What became of that respect to his Majesty; that decency and attention prescribed by the constitution? The order of the House was also urged. But it did not follow that they, when they made that order, understood that the paper was presented in any other but the ordinary constitutional way, through the Secretary of State, or the Commander in Chief. At any rate, it was not fair to bind the House down to what, on consideration, they found to be pregnant with mischief. On most important points, they rescinded their orders, when they saw that evil consequences would result from them, not at first contemplated. He had no resolution ready to submit, but humbly referred to the Speaker to say, whether this matter was conformable to the constitution and usages of parliament.

Mr. Secretary Ryder did not think the matter of sufficient importance, to call on the Speaker for a decision, which only seemed to be the forlorn hope of gentlemen, who found their arguments could not bear them out in what they wished. It was impossible to ground a single constitutional argument on their view of the case; and if statements against the navy were contained in the narrative, the navy might gainsay them by a counter statement.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer explained. He was prepared to declare himself responsible, that this was the paper called for by the House.

Mr. Windham suggested that there were two distinct questions involved in the present discussion: the one was, the contents of the paper now before them, with which he apprehended they had for the present nothing to do, though the time he trusted was not far distant, when they would form the subject of their most serious consideration; the other, with which alone he conceived they had to do at present, was the

mode and form in which this paper came before them. This he did not hesitate to say was wholly repugnant to every practice which past experience and the principles of the constitution would be found to warrant; for instance, they knew by what means the paper had come to them from the king; but could they say who was the author, by what organ, or through what channel, it had reached the royal presence. Suppose, upon the first part of the case, they should come to the resolution of impeaching lord Chatham as the supposed author, with what testimony, and upon what evidence, could they support their charge at the bar of the House of Lords? The paper appeared on the face of it to be unofficial, and to have been delivered privately into the king's closet, and they could neither constitutionally, nor with decency, look for evidence from that august quarter. Who, then, should say that the noble earl was neither the author nor deliverer of the paper? If it were to be found deserving of censure, it would be said the noble lord was that night to be examined at their bar, and the difficulty could be solved by asking him the question. But what if his lordship refused to be examined? The fact was, they were now called upon to decide upon the admissibility of the paper upon the evidence now before them; and he contended, it came in so questionable a shape, so contrary to every precedent and practice grounded on the principles of the constitution, that the House was bound not merely to reject, but to censure it.

Mr. Whitbread and lord Cochrane rose at the same time.

Mr. *Whitbread* was anxious to speak before the noble lord, whose feelings, as a naval man, must be much agitated by what they had heard. He understood from a right hon. gent. (Mr. Canning) that he, while in his Majesty's service, had suggested a call on lord Chatham, for a narrative of the Expedition. This would have been the proper course; but it was evident the idea had not been persevered in. Upon the face of the paper, it appeared to him that there was not only a condemnation of ministers, but of the noble lord himself. Now was the communication of the noble lord known, or unknown, to ministers? It must have been unknown. It was written in October, and presented in February; between which dates an Address had been presented to his Majesty,

from the City of London, to which his Majesty was advised to answer, that he judged no inquiry necessary—Lord Chatham could not have been consulted as a minister upon this answer, for he must have said, that inquiry into the naval part of the Expedition, at least, was necessary.—How, then, did he stand as one of his Majesty's responsible advisers? If ministers did not know of this communication, then they deserved impeachment for advising such an answer to the metropolis of the empire. If they did know of it, and lord Chatham was a party to that answer, then his conduct was reprehensible in the extreme. It was said the navy might gainsay any accusation against them. How could they gainsay this private poison secretly instilled into the ear of their royal master?—The paper was moved for by a private friend of lord Chatham, and it did seem as if it was formed for the purpose to which it was applied, of throwing blame from lord Chatham upon sir R. Strachan and the navy. A right hon. gent. had said that every man might have access to his Majesty; why, then, was not the city of London admitted?—Lord Chatham, as a favourite, might do what others could not, and ministers might try to persuade that House of their responsibility, when they knew that the very way in which they got into power was by means of their irresponsibility. Did ministers know of this paper or not?—Did they know of this underhand accusation of Sir R. Strachan, who was called as a witness before them, without knowing that a paper containing insinuations against him, was lying in the king's closet? He was most ready to defer to the decision of the Speaker, but a question like this ought to be decided by the House itself. The right hon. gent. spoke lightly of impeachment; but if the House did not impeach him and his colleagues, then all their rights and privileges were, indeed, gone. The right hon. gent. accused them of envying him the possession of his place. "For all the gold, that human sinews, bought and sold, could ever earn," he would not be in his situation. They did, indeed, wish to turn him out, for the salvation of the country; but even out of office, he trusted punishment would follow him. The way in which the paper came before the king, was unconstitutional, and ministers were not responsible, as they ought to be.

Mr. *Cuning* in explanation, said, that when he was in office, he understood a narrative was to be delivered to his Majesty, but that it was to comprehend both the military and navy; he assured the House it was not his suggestion.

Sir *Home Popham* could not help considering the contents of this paper as a direct reflection upon the Commander in Chief of the naval part of the Expedition, who, would, he was satisfied, be found fully able to vindicate his conduct. As to the change which had taken place in the original plan of attack upon Walcheren, he was enabled to state, that that change was determined upon at Deal, in consequence of information there obtained; and the determination, with the causes which recommended it, was communicated to lord Chatham, who fully approved of it. Therefore, if there was any blame imputable to the change, the noble lord must take his full share of it. The honourable officer dwelt upon the zeal, energy, and judgment displayed by Sir Richard Strachan, throughout the whole of the Expedition—upon his eagerness to consult, and his wishes to forward every suggestion of the noble earl from whom this statement proceeded. After such experience, he was surprised and sorry now to see the apple of discord thrown down. But neither the gallant admiral nor any member of the profession to which he had the honour to belong, could possibly allow such charges as this paper contained to pass unanswered or without the most scrupulous and comprehensive inquiry.

General *Lofi* disclaimed any intention, on the part of his noble friend (lord Chatham,) to reflect upon the navy, whose exertions he always applauded. But the Address referred to, his noble friend was impelled to present in consequence of the unfortunate letter from sir R. Strachan, dated the 27th August.

Mr. *R. Dundas* observed, that it could not be unconstitutional for a minister to deliver a paper to his Majesty, or for a peer of the kingdom to go into the Royal closet. Lord Chatham was the only person responsible, and he could not shrink from that, as the House would make him so.

Mr. *C. W. Wyndham* could not agree in the principle laid down by the right hon. gent. who last spoke, as to the responsibility of lord Chatham. If the House thought proper to impeach the noble lord, what evidence of the narrative could they pro-

duce to the House of Lords? The cases of lord Bristol, and that of the seven Bishops, were exactly in point; there the difficulty was found. And where the House, having those precedents before their eyes, going to put themselves in the same situation? The precedent in itself was dangerous, for it was laying down one for all general officers. The circumstances in themselves were ludicrous. Here was a minister, sent by the king's ministers, as Commander in Chief of the greatest Expedition ever sent out of the country, keeping up a correspondence with the king unknown to his ministry. As a minister he did not doubt his right of having an easy access to the royal ear, and of giving advice as to his department; but here it was different; for as Commander in Chief, he had no such right; but, contrary to all constitutional precedent, he delivered the narrative to his Majesty, hiding it from the secretary of state carefully. After using the most just and complimentary epithets on the excellent, upright, and impartial conduct of the Speaker, he concluded by saying, that there never was an occasion in which the House stood so much in want of his assistance, and called upon him to give his opinion.

Mr. *Bathurst* was of opinion, on constitutional grounds, that the narrative should be put out of sight, or that it should lie dormant on the table; and when lord Chatham came as a witness before the Committee, let it be put in his hand, and if he identified it, the Committee could act upon it.

Sir *John Ord* was sorry that the observations which he had heard that night, had been made use of, as they might tend to injure the reputation of officers, who were liable to be brought to court martial.

Mr. *G. Johnstone* said, as the paper was before them, it was expedient that they should take it into consideration; but the manner in which it came before them, was to be deplored, and he should for ever lament that it was called for at all.

The *Speaker* rose, and said, he trusted the House would not be surprised at his delay in giving his opinion; as to his right, it could not be doubted. He had kept back with the intention of forming and giving the best opinion his judgment and ability would allow. The motion of the hon. member, (general Lofi) was correct. It had been the custom of that House to believe the averment of any

hon. member. There were precedents in the year 1776, when the House thought proper to call for a Memorial delivered to his Majesty, in his private closet, by an Imperial Resident. In that, as in the present case, his Majesty had graciously condescended to send, by the proper channel, one of his privy council, the paper asked for, to which the House was entitled to give full credit. On his first opening the narrative before them, he found the name of Chatham; yet he felt doubtful at first whether it ought to be received and acknowledged by that House on account of its not bearing the signature of any of his Majesty's secretaries of state: but considering by whom it was presented, and knowing that he was accountable to that hon. House for its authenticity, he waved his doubts until he sent for some papers, which, on perusing, he found that lord North had presented several similar papers, and that he was considered *prima facie* accountable, a circumstance, which, in his opinion, left the House at full liberty to discuss the merits of the Narrative. The Speaker concluded by saying, the House would bear in their recollection that he did not presume to touch on the consequences or the merits of it.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then moved, That it should be referred to the Committee of the whole House on the Expedition to the Scheldt, which was agreed to.

On the Order of the Day being read, for the House going into a Committee on the Expedition to the Scheldt, Mr. Yorke moved the Standing Order, and strangers were of course excluded.

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Tuesday, February 20.*

[OFFICES IN REVERSION BILL.] Earl *Grosvenor* rose, and proposed his bill for preventing the granting of places in reversion. After a few observations from the noble lord, the question was about to be put for the first reading of the bill, when,

Lord *Arden* submitted to the House his objections to the measure. His lordship observed, that in cases where the interest of the crown was directly concerned, the consent of the crown was given, according to the practice of parliament, to the proposed measure. The present bill affected the rights of the royal prerogative,

as it went to take away the royal power of granting offices for lives. The King was, by the constitution of the country, the fountain of honour; and in a question like the present, his lordship considered it his duty to object to proceeding without that attention to the rights of the sovereign which the nature of the case required. He thought, therefore, that their lordships could not with propriety proceed farther with such a bill, without an intimation of the description he had alluded to.

Earl *Grosvenor* was much surprized to hear of this kind of objection, to a measure which had been already recognized by parliament, which had been in part effected by the passing of the bill suspending the exercise of the royal prerogative; an objection which had never occurred before, not even in the case of the rejection of the last bill. Ministers had not expressed any such ground of objection, nor stated their opinions against the bill. He was, therefore, desirous of knowing their sentiments on this important subject.

The Earl of *Rosslyn* spoke with much animation in support of the first reading of the bill. He contended, that the practice of the House of Commons was different from that of their lordships, in whose House it was not necessary to give any exposition of the character of a measure previously, nor to give notice of an intended motion. The first reading would put their lordships in full possession of the nature of the bill. It was due to the other House, to the general opinion of the public, and to the spirit of the measure of suspension already enacted, and which would expire in a few weeks, to go fairly into the consideration of the bill now introduced by his noble friend.

Lord *Redesdale* supported the observation of his noble friend (lord Arden,) respecting the practice whenever the interests of the crown were concerned. The want of attention to it in one instance was no reason for neglecting it in another. The precedents in this question were favourable to such attention. But to afford the fairest opportunity of full information on this subject, he should prefer postponing the adjournment of this debate until the next day, by which time noble lords could consult the journals of the House as to all matters of precedent that bore upon the subject. His lordship added, that he thought it was generally expected, on the introduction of a bill,

that a noble lord should open the nature and object of the measure he proposed. The noble baron concluded by moving the adjournment of the debate until the next day.

Lord *Holland* contended that the practice of that House required no notice of motion, nor previous exposition of reasons for introducing a bill, the reading of which would acquaint every noble lord with the object of it. It was strange that this bill should meet with such an objection, after its principle had been so often before them. He wished to know what ministers, the confidential servants of the crown, the persons to whom the government of the country was entrusted, had to say to this measure. Did they object to it or not? The acting ministers of the crown were not present in the House, but there were some members of the government present; and he desired to know from them their sentiments on the objection, and on the merits of the bill itself.

The question being called for, the lord Chancellor stated the adjournment of the debate to be carried by the contents, on which a division took place, and the numbers were Contents, 15, Non Contents, 7.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday February 20.*

[MARINE INSURANCE.] Mr. *Manning* rose to revive his motion of a former night, for a committee to inquire into the present state of Marine Insurance, and to enquire in what manner the public might be better accommodated. He said, he rose in consequence of the fate of his proposition on a former night, from the state of the House, to renew his motion for the appointment of a select committee, to consider of the act of Geo. I. for incorporating the London and Royal Exchange Assurance Companies, and also of the state of the means of effecting marine insurances in London. The hon. gent. repeated the arguments and statements with which he prefaced his motion on the former night, and concluded with moving, that a select committee be appointed.

Mr. *Grenfell* opposed it on the ground that the establishment proposed would be an invasion of the chartered rights of the existing companies. He should not object, however, to going into a committee, if it were to be an open one.

Mr. *Murray* went over the same ground of argument as on the former occasion.

He contended that the supporters of the petition wanted to exempt themselves from that responsibility on the whole of their property, which attached to individual underwriters. The consequence would be, that as the new company would be responsible only to the amount of its capital, if that company should at any time become insolvent, the individual members would still remain in affluence, and drive in their coaches by the persons who had been ruined by such insolvency. The underwriters at Lloyd's often, to avoid litigation, paid for losses which they could not be compelled to make good. They were often, from such motives, induced to pay for vessels loaded with brick-bats and stones instead of goods, and even sometimes for vessels which were never in existence at all. A company, on the contrary, would look more narrowly into every case, and consequently litigation would be increased rather than diminished. In short, the supporters of the intended measure wished to engross to themselves all the profits of the brokers and underwriters.

The committee was then appointed.

[BREACH OF PRIVILEGE—COMPLAINT AGAINST J. DEAN.] Mr. *Yorke* moved the order of the day for the attendance of J. Dean, the printer at the bar.

The Serjeant then brought him to the bar.

The *Speaker* interrogated him.

Is your name Dean?—It is.

What is your Christian name?—John.

The *Speaker*. John Dean, a complaint having been made to this House, that you had printed a paper reflecting upon its proceedings, and upon the conduct of some of its members, what have you to say for yourself respecting the offence you have committed?

*John Dean*. It was I that printed that paper. I was employed to print it by John Gale Jones. I have been employed by him in printing such papers for three or four years. I did not know that in printing that paper I was committing an offence against this honourable House. That paper was printed without my knowledge of its contents, as I did not see the press copy of it until after the whole impression was thrown off. I humbly beg pardon of this honourable House for my offence, and am ready to give up the manuscript, and to prove that it is the hand-writing of John Gale Jones.

The *Speaker*. You may withdraw.

Serjeant, take care that he does not depart.—On the printer having withdrawn,

Mr. Yorke expressed his satisfaction, that the person at the bar appeared sensible of his offence, and not only expressed contrition, but offered to make the only atonement in his power by giving up the author of this gross libel. Every gentleman must allow, that it was a breach of the privileges of that House. He thought that printers should be made to feel, that they could not print such libels with impunity. In this case, the individual could not but have known, that, in printing such a paper, he was doing wrong. In consideration, however, of his submission, he did not mean to press for any severity towards the printer. But, whatever it might be the pleasure of the House to do with the printer, he should feel it his duty to take measures to have John Gale Jones brought to the bar.

After a suggestion from the Speaker, as to the usual mode of proceeding in such cases, it was moved by Mr. Yorke, and voted, *nem. con.* "That the said J. Dean, in having printed the said paper, has been guilty of a high breach of the privilege of this House."

Mr. Yorke expressed a wish to hear the opinions of other gentlemen as to the course that should be followed. He supposed the next step should be to move that he be ordered into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

The Speaker thought it his duty to state to the House what had been its practice on similar occasions. The last case of this description which occurred, was that of Wilkie, and in that instance the offender had been ordered into custody. The House having voted, that the person at the bar had been guilty of a high breach of its privileges, could not pass over the offence without some degree of imprisonment, in order to shew printers that they could not commit such offences with impunity.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, after what had been stated from the chair, felt inclined to concur with his right hon. friend, that the person should be ordered into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms. As the person at the bar, however, had offered to give up the actual author of the libel, he wished the House to be as lenient to him as possible.

Mr. H. Smith thought that the printer deserved some consideration. It would be more dignified in the House to order

the man to attend at the bar to-morrow. He concluded by moving an amendment, that he be ordered to attend to-morrow.

Mr. Whitbread felt that, after what the Speaker had stated, it would be necessary to take some further notice of the offence than was proposed in the amendment of the hon. gent. If that hon. member would withdraw his amendment, then he should propose an amendment, that the person at the bar be reprimanded by the Speaker, and discharged.—The other amendment having been withdrawn, the hon. gent. then proposed his amendment.

Mr. Croker observed, that the House had no security but his own assertion, that the statement of the person at the bar was correct. It might, therefore, be necessary to keep him in custody till the truth of his statement could be ascertained.

Sir J. Anstruther was of opinion, that such offences as those of the person at the bar might be suffered to pass *sub silentio*. According to the statement of that person, the practice had gone on for three or four years, without any notice having been taken of it; and it was not till the name of the right hon. gent. had appeared in large characters in these papers, that he felt it necessary for him to bring the subject now for the first time before the House. Gentlemen should bear in mind the time and circumstances in which this matter was brought under their consideration. The slightest punishment would be sufficient, and as this was the first time for four years that the subject had been before the House, he thought that some notice should be given to printers, that they may not err in the same way again.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was not shaken by what he had heard as to his original opinion. On the contrary, what had fallen from his right hon. friend rather confirmed him in that opinion. If the practice had been going on for a length of time, it was necessary to take measures to put a check upon it. He was inclined to be as little severe as possible, but some punishment must be inflicted. He was sure it was not the intention of his hon. friend, to give countenance to such a practice, though it would obviously have that effect. If the persons who committed such offences should find that there were gentlemen in that House to protect them, they would be encouraged to proceed. To keep the man in custody for the advantage of his evidence, was no more than was done uniformly in case of

a witness who was *particeps criminis*. He should therefore concur in the vote for committing the party to custody.

Mr. *Horner* congratulated the right hon. gentleman on the recovery of his animation in argument and debate. He had risen from that languor and chastened tone, which he had hitherto employed in discussing the most important political questions; but perhaps he had now found a subject more to his mind. The only question now to be considered was, what was the extent of the offence, and what should be the measure of punishment? He was of opinion that the more lenient the punishment, the more suitable it would be to the dignity of the house.

Lord *Porchester* said, the question simply was, whether the punishment should be severe or lenient. He thought this printer had shewn every mark of contrition: and he begged the House to recollect, that printers had of late years been obliged to sign their own accusation in the first instance, by giving their name and address at the end of every thing they print. It had therefore been held, in the courts of law, that where a printer willingly gave up his employer, the author, the most lenient punishment should be inflicted. On this ground, as well as from the printer's whole behaviour while before the House, he should vote for his being now reprimanded and discharged.

Mr. *C. Adams* proposed, that he should be taken into the custody of the serjeant at arms for an hour.

The question on the amendment was then put and negatived: and afterwards the original motion, "that the said John Dean be committed to the custody of the serjeant at arms," was agreed to, and Mr. John Gale Jones was ordered to attend to-morrow.

[CORN DISTILLERY PROHIBITION BILL.] Mr. *Rose* moved the order of the day for the second reading of this bill.

Mr. *Western* opposed it, on the ground that the same reasons did not exist now as did when the bill was first brought in. The situation of the West India merchants was much changed; and as the ground was altered, they should shew new reasons for the bill. The average prices of corn, except wheat, were lower now than in 1808.

Mr. *Rose* said, that if the importation of corn had not taken place, the quartern loaf would now have been at 2s.; and that not only bread, but beer would have been raised very considerably.

Sir *T. Turton* was for continuing the prohibition, as he considered the average price of all manner of corn, taken together, as greater than what it was in 1808. As his property was entirely in land, it could not be supposed his wish to sacrifice his interest to those of the West India merchants. He thought, however, that the interest of the great mass of labouring peasants and manufacturers should be attended to, and that care should be taken that they should not be affected by a scarcity of corn, he thought also, in justice, that the prohibition should extend to Ireland.

Sir *James Hall* objected to the prohibition.

Mr. *Parnell* denied that the average prices were higher now than in 1808, and contended that they were the prices of a falling market. In the London market inferior barley was absolutely unsaleable. He was of opinion that the prohibition should not be continued.

Sir *John Newport* also stated, that the prices were those of a falling market.

The House then divided on the second reading. Ayes 155, Noes 54, Majority 101.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Wednesday, February 21.*

[BREACH OF PRIVILEGE—MR. JOHN GALE JONES.] Mr. *Yorke* moved the order of the day for bringing Mr. John Gale Jones to the bar. Mr. Jones being brought accordingly,

The *Speaker* addressed him as follows:—"John Gale Jones; a complaint having been made to this House of the publication of a scandalous and libellous hand-bill, reflecting on the proceedings of this honourable House, and the conduct of certain of its members; and the printer of the said hand-bill having been called to the bar of this House to answer for the said publication, alledged that you are the author thereof. What have you to say in your behalf?"

Mr. *Jones* answered, I acknowledge, Sir, that I was the author of that paper, and I am extremely sorry the printer has experienced any inconvenience on my account.

The *Speaker*.—Repeat what you have said.

Mr. *Jones* complied.

The *Speaker*.—Have you any thing more to say in your behalf?

Mr. *Jones*.—"I sincerely lament that I

should have incurred the displeasure of this honourable House: and I trust they will not consider that, in what I have done, I was actuated by any sense of disrespect to its privileges, or the persons of any of its members individually, or that I had any other motive in mentioning the names of the two honourable members alluded to, save that they happened to be connected with a subject of public discussion. I have always considered it the privilege of every Englishman to animadvert on public measures, and the conduct of public men; but in looking over the paper in question again, I find that I have erred; I beg to express my contrition: and I throw myself on the mercy of this honourable House; this House of Commons, which, as an important branch of the constitution, has always had my unfeigned respect."

The *Speaker* then addressed the House, and put the question, "That the said John Gale Jones, in having been the author of the said paper, and having caused the same to be printed, has been guilty of a gross breach of the Privileges of this House." This question was carried *nem. con.*

Mr. *Yorke* then rose and said, that after the vote just passed, he thought it impossible the House should not follow it up by some further resolution, which should mark its own sense of the insult offered to its high authority, by the person now at the bar, and by making a proper example, warn such persons from taking upon them to comment in such a way upon the proceedings of that House, and the conduct of its members. As to himself, he could appeal to the opinions of those who knew him best, whether during the twenty years he had been a member of that House, he had ever evinced a disposition for personal severity. If an hon. baronet, who made some observations on this subject last night, were now in his place, he should say something in answer; but as he was absent, he should refrain. For the present, he should only say, that from the frequency of those comments, insulting to the dignity of that House and the persons of its members, which had of late prevailed, he thought it high time some measures should be adopted effectually to check such proceedings; and, that the House should mark its sense of its own dignity on the present occasion, by inflicting some exemplary punishment on the person at the bar. He therefore moved, That John Gale Jones, for his

offence, be committed to his Majesty's gaol of Newgate.

The question was then put and carried *nem. con.*

Mr. *Yorke* then adverted to the case of John Dean, the printer, who attended at the bar yesterday, and was now in the custody of the Serjeant at arms, and said, that from the manner in which Dean had conducted himself, the readiness with which he gave up the name of the author of the libel in question, the contrition he had shewn for his offence, and the consideration that he was an honest and industrious man, with a family, and not in affluent circumstances, he should now move that he be discharged without paying fees.

The *Speaker* said, he understood the prisoner was prepared to comply with the usual forms of the House, by presenting a petition praying for his release.

Mr. *Yorke* presented a Petition from Mr. Dean setting forth, "That the Petitioner has carried on the business of a Printer nearly three years, and was employed by Mr. John Gale Jones, of No. 10, Brill Terrace, Somers Town, to print the hand bill which has so justly drawn upon the Petitioner the punishment of the House; and that the manuscript of the said hand bill, now in the possession of the Petitioner, and ready to be produced before the House, is in the hand writing of the said Mr. John Gale Jones; and that the said hand bill was worked off by the Petitioner's workmen, without the personal attention of the Petitioner; and that the Petitioner is highly sensible of the offence he has committed, and most humbly prays forgiveness of the House."

Ordered, "That the said John Dean be now brought to the bar of this House, in order to his being reprimanded and discharged." He was accordingly brought to the bar, where he received a reprimand from Mr. *Speaker*, and was ordered to be discharged out of custody without paying any fees. The reprimand was as followeth, viz.

"John Dean;—Complaint having been made to this House against you as the printer of a scandalous and libellous paper, reflecting on the proceedings of this House, and the conduct of some of its members, you were ordered to attend, that you might answer the charge; and having thereupon attended, you have acknowledged yourself to be guilty of the offence alledged, declaring indeed at the same time your sincere contrition for your misconduct,



and naming the author of the libel.—This House could not but highly resent your offence; and, with a just regard to its own dignity and authority, upon which depend the rights of the whole Commons of this Realm, it declared, by its unanimous resolution, that you were guilty of having grossly violated its privileges; and committed you accordingly to the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.—Nevertheless, your demeanour at the time of confessing your guilt at the bar, the penitence which you then expressed, and which you have again repeated in your Petition this day, accompanied by the means which you have afforded of detecting the principal delinquent, have duly weighed in your favour: In consideration, therefore, of these particular circumstances in your case, this House has consented that you be now no longer detained in custody, and moreover that you be discharged without the payment of any fees, and you are now discharged accordingly.

Ordered, *nec. com.*, "That what has now been said by Mr. Speaker, in reprimanding the said John Dean, be entered in the Journals of this House."

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, February 22.

[ROMAN CATHOLICS OF ENGLAND.]—Earl Grey pre-ented two petitions from the Roman Catholics of England, the first stating the hardships arising from the disabilities under which they laboured, and respectfully praying to be relieved from them; and the second expressing their willingness to consent to any arrangement that might be deemed necessary for the security of the existing establishments which might not be inconsistent with their own religious opinions.—The petitions having been read, his lordship said he should merely now move that they be laid on the table, and should not probably make any motion relative to them during the session. He could not, however, omit the opportunity of making a few observations upon the subject to which these petitions related, and which, in whatever point of view considered, was one of the greatest importance. At the present momentous crisis, it was surely of the utmost consequence to the security of the empire to unite all his Majesty's subjects heartily and cordially in the defence of the country. Yet, as the petition stated in the

most respectful terms, the Catholics of England were placed under the most degrading disabilities, and were not even permitted to attain those situations in which they could render themselves useful to the cause of their country; and this, notwithstanding they were a most loyal and respectable body, at all times ready and eager to join their fellow-subjects in promoting and defending the common interests of the state, and who fulfilled all their duties in society with exemplary propriety. They were indeed placed in a worse situation than the Catholics in other parts of his Majesty's dominions. In Canada his Majesty's Catholic subjects were allowed all the benefits of the most enlarged toleration, or, in other words, were eligible to all offices in common with their protestant fellow subjects. In Ireland Catholics were allowed to act as Magistrates under commissions of the peace—to become members of lay corporations, except Trinity College, at which, however, they might take degrees, and to vote at elections for members of parliament; all the ranks of the army were also open to them, except that of a general on the staff. In England Catholics could not act as magistrates, could not be included in a commission of the peace—could not become members of any Corporation, and were debarred from taking degrees at either of the Universities; the ranks of the army and navy were closed against them, and even if giving up the rank to which they were born and becoming privates in any military force, they were dependent upon the will of others, not merely as to whether they should be allowed to exercise their own religion, but whether they should not be compelled to attend a religious service different from their own. It was surely utterly inconsistent with a liberal and enlightened policy that such degrading disabilities should be continued. The Catholics had uniformly displayed their loyalty, and their zeal, whenever they had had opportunities of being employed in the service of their country, and were in other respects a most respectable body. In the county to which he belonged there were several persons of that persuasion of ancient and respectable families, who, as friends and neighbours, as parents of families, and in all the relations of society, conducted themselves with the greatest propriety, and this he believed to be the general character of that body. He could

not, therefore, but hope, upon all these grounds, that a long period would not elapse before the disabilities under which this meritorious and respectable body of men at present laboured would be done away, and that they would not be much longer prevented from attaining those situations in which they might serve the cause of their country in common with their fellow-subjects. He was the more induced to entertain this hope, having been authorised to state, that the Catholics of England were willing to consent that, in granting them those privileges which they asked, such means as might be thought advisable should be adopted for the security of the existing establishments, provided they were not contrary to their religious opinions and feelings. He had stated that he did not intend to make any motion upon this subject during the present session, and he did so with a view to all the circumstances of the case of the Catholics in another part of his Majesty's dominions. He trusted that, with reference to this part of the case, the letter of his noble friend (lord Grenville) would have the wished for effect. He begged leave decidedly to declare, that to every reason, to every sentiment, and to every word of that letter, he most entirely subscribed, and he hoped that so temperate and well reasoned an appeal would lead to those consequences and to that disposition which were so much to be desired. He wished it to be understood, that he could support the object desired to be attained by the Catholics upon no other ground than that every security should be given to the existing establishments consistently with liberality and justice, and with the religious opinions and feelings of that respectable body. The second petition, which was signed by three out of four of the apostolic vicars-general, and by most of the catholic peers, went to this object; It was worded in a general way, and he thought it was better that it should be so. He had little doubt that the object so much to be desired, would be in the end attained, and that a disposition would be brought about under the influence of which those points which were necessary to its attainment, would on both sides be conceded. His lordship concluded by moving, that the petitions do lie on the table.—Ordered.

[*KING'S MESSAGE RESPECTING PORTUGAL*.] The Order of the Day, for taking into consideration his Majesty's Message

relative to the Convention with Portugal, having been read,

The Marquis Wellesley rose to move an Address to his Majesty, assuring his Majesty of the cheerful concurrence of that House in promoting the objects of his Majesty's most gracious communication. He really was at a loss to conjecture what could be the nature of the objections that would be raised to the present motion. The arrangement which it recommended, proceeded on the general principles of the policy which has so long and so uniformly guided the conduct of this country towards Portugal. It proceeded not only in those general principles, but also on the principle which now induced us to succour Spain, and on the plan established of making the defence of Portugal auxiliary to the defence of Spain. It also proceeded on the principle of animating and combining the efforts of our allies in the prosecution of the arduous contest in which they and this country were now engaged. He would ask then, what has of late occurred to make us swerve from that good faith which has hitherto characterized our connection with Portugal, or to depart from those principles which have invariably influenced our alliance with that kingdom, to the present hour?—In the course of what he had briefly to state on the present occasion, he should first advert to the nature of the arrangement recommended in his Majesty's Message. That arrangement would be fully understood by a reference to the papers now on the table. In the early part of those transactions which menaced the independence of Portugal, it was proposed in aid of the cause of that country to take 10,000 Portuguese troops into the pay of England to be commanded by British officers. At a subsequent period it was judged expedient to add 10,000 more to that number, and lastly in the present year, it was thought proper to carry the extent of that force to 30,000 men by a further addition of 10,000 more. The charge for the first 20,000 men was estimated at 600,000*l.* That for the present 10,000 men, 250,000*l.* to which was to be added a further sum of 130,000*l.* for the maintenance of the officers to be employed in disciplining and training these Portuguese levies, and in preparing them adequately to act in conjunction with the British troops. It was proper it should be understood that no specific treaty had been concluded for this purpose; but that the arrangement

agreed upon, placed it at the discretion of his Majesty's Government, to act according to the nature of the varying circumstances to which the situation of Portugal must now be liable. This was thought the most expedient mode, as from the distance of the Portuguese government, if a specific treaty had been entered into, stipulations might have been provided, which from the fluctuating state of affairs in Portugal, it might be found impossible to execute, and which therefore might prove highly inconvenient from the restrictions which they might have imposed; while by reserving a discretionary power to his Majesty's Government, such measures may be adopted as the course of events may render most advisable. For these reasons no written treaty has been concluded; but the arrangement entered into was made to rest on the plain, broad principle, that every aid should be given to Portugal to enable her to resist the common enemy; with every degree of assistance which can tend to stimulate her own exertions, and to encourage her to call forth her own resources, for the assertion of her natural independence. Such was the general principle, such the extent, of the present arrangement with Portugal. Now if there should be happily room to observe, that in proportion to the improvement of their discipline, the resistance of the Portuguese should become more successful; if with the improvement of their discipline, their courage and perseverance should be more resolutely displayed; if true to herself, and confident in her own means, Portugal should shew no disposition to crouch to the enemy, or rely entirely for her deliverance on a foreign aid; should we not be prepared on the principles of our old alliance with that country, to afford her every aid and every encouragement that can contribute to animate her exertions and uphold her resolution? Such was in all times the spirit of our policy with respect to Portugal, however it might be differently viewed by some persons; but he should not think it necessary to go far back into the history of that policy. Occurrences not very remote sufficiently illustrated that policy, and manifested the propriety then felt of acting in strict conformity with its principles. When Buonaparté first issued a declaration threatening the invasion of Portugal, what was the situation of that country and of Spain. In Spain the influence of France was pre-

dominant; her government was without energy, system or principle; Portugal possessed no adequate means of resistance, and it was moreover to be feared that the designs of the enemy against her would be favoured by the secret connivance if not the direct assistance, of the Spanish government. Under these discouraging circumstances what was then the determination of the British government: although they had a great army at their disposal, did they dissuade Portugal from making a vigorous resistance to the enemy? Did they propose to abandon her to her fate? Quite the contrary—not only did they signify to Portugal that she should have every aid from this country; but a powerful army was actually prepared to co-operate in her resistance to the enemy. And here he might appeal to the language and the conduct held on that occasion by two of our ablest statesmen; one a person of transcendent abilities, now no more (Mr. Fox); the other a person of abilities, perhaps, little inferior (Mr. Windham):—Was it not the opinion of these distinguished persons, then members of the British government, that every aid should be afforded to Portugal to enable her to resist the progress of the French army? That every means should be employed to stimulate her exertions for her own interests and for the vindication of her own independence. And when did we discontinue our efforts for the security of Portugal? Not while the danger was urgent: but precisely at the moment when it had ceased; and when the enemy was compelled by the state of affairs in other parts of the world, to postpone the execution of his designs against our ally. Such was the conduct of the British government upon that occasion; and he should be ever ready to assert that it was a conduct most justly and wisely pursued. Such was the principle upon which they then acted, a principle the justice and policy of which had afterwards been sanctioned by their lordship's approbation. Now how nearly do the principles acted upon in the present case assimilate with those which the British government adopted on that occasion. They had three objects in view: first to defend the country of Portugal; Secondly, if that were found impracticable, to secure the defence of the Portuguese colonies and to facilitate the emigration thither of the Portuguese government; and lastly, if every other resource failed, to rescue and save the Portuguese fleet in the

Tagus. The first object having been found impracticable, their attention was turned to the other two, and the Portuguese government and fleet were conveyed out of danger.

In the present instance their lordships would feel that a question of still greater importance had arisen: Not only had we now to act on the original principles of the alliance with Portugal; but also on the principle of assisting the great cause of Spain. Under that impression it was resolved that an effort should be made for the recovery of Portugal, and Portugal has been delivered not only on the principles of the old alliance but, also with a view to the assistance of the common cause. Had their lordships any reason to regret the efforts that had thus been made, or the adherence to the policy by which they were directed. It was never denied but that the defence of Portugal must be highly advantageous to the cause of Spain. It never was denied that Portugal was the most material military position that could be occupied for that purpose: It must therefore be acknowledged that the occupation of Portugal by British troops, is essential to any aid we can be expected to afford to Spain.

If then their lordships had not abandoned the whole system of that policy upon which this country has hitherto acted towards Portugal, if they were not prepared to desert both Spain and Portugal in this crisis of their fate, what could now induce them to depart from the principle, even of encouraging Portugal to make exertions for her own defence? He must again say that he was wholly at a loss to divine what arguments could be adduced in opposition to the present motion. He heard it intimated indeed, not long since by a friendly voice, (lord Grenville) a voice which he trusted would always prove friendly to him, but which never could prove more friendly than when, as on the present occasion, it afforded him an opportunity of vindicating the good faith and honour of this country: by that voice he had heard it intimated that circumstances had recently occurred, which rendered the whole cause desperate; that it was in vain to continue any further aid to Portugal or Spain, and that consequently it would be useless to concur in the present address. He was ready to admit that great disasters had lately befallen the Spanish cause: he admitted it with pain and regret, and no person could view them

with deeper concern than he did; but still they were far from sinking his mind into despair. Still he would contend, that it was neither politic nor just to manifest any intention of abandoning Portugal. And here he would call upon their lordships distinctly to say, whether they were prepared to withdraw the British troops from Portugal, and thus dispirit that country and induce her to relax her efforts for her own defence? What advantage could be derived from thus casting over our own councils, and the hopes of Portugal and Spain the hue and complexion of despair? To tell them that the hour of their fate was arrived, that all attempts to assist them; or even to inspirit their exertions in their own defence, were now of no avail; that they must bow the neck and submit to the yoke of a merciless invader? This indeed would be to strew the conqueror's path with flowers; to prepare the way for his triumphal march to the throne of the two kingdoms. Was it then for this that so much treasure had been expended, that so much blood had been shed (loud cries of hear! hear!) that so much of the blood had been shed of those gallant and loyal nations? Whatever calamities and disasters had befallen them, they were not imputable to the people of Spain. The spirit of the people was excellent, and he still ventured to hope that it would prove unconquerable. All their defeats and disasters were solely to be ascribed to the vices of their government. It was his decided opinion, and he would not hesitate again to repeat it; that it was the imbecility or treachery of that vile and wretched government which first opened the breach through which the enemy entered into the heart of Spain: that delivered into hostile hands all the fortresses of that country; and betrayed her people defenceless and unarmed into the power of a perfidious foe. Let us not contribute to accomplish what they have so inauspiciously begun. Let not their lordships come to any resolution that can justify Portugal in relaxing her exertions, or Spain in considering her cause as hopeless. Yet what other consequence would result from prematurely withdrawing the British troops from Portugal, or retracting the grounds upon which we have hitherto assisted her? He intreated their lordships seriously to weigh all these considerations in their mind, and he was confident that every motive and principle of good faith, justice, honour and policy would concur

in persuading them to adopt the address which he should now have the honour of proposing. The noble Marquis concluded with moving an address to the effect we have already mentioned.

Lord Grenville felt it an ungrateful task, a painful duty, to recal their lordships attention to predictions formerly made to them, but then despised and rejected; though now, unfortunately, all of them, too fatally, fulfilled. He knew how little acceptable it was to anticipate, by a reference to our past experience a continuance of the same disasters; but in discharging that duty, he did it with the more consolation, because it was not a mere barren censure of past errors, that was his object, but rather from the consideration of those errors, to conjure them to rescue the country from similar calamities, to pay some regard to the valuable lives of their fellow-citizens, and to ask their lordships whether they were disposed to sit in that House day after day, and year after year, spectators of wasteful expenditure, and the useless effusion of so much of the best blood of the country in hopeless, calamitous, and disgraceful efforts. Such being his object in rising to address their lordships, he might plead to them the cause of the British army, which might soon be wanted for our own safety, and should, therefore, not be exposed in wild, impracticable, and useless expeditions. What return did their lordships think was due to that army for the eminent skill, and discipline, and valour which it had displayed? it was a sacred duty imposed upon their lordships, to see that not one more life was wasted, not one more drop of blood shed unprofitably, where no thinking man could say, that by any human possibility, such dreadful sacrifices could be made with any prospect of advantage to the country. Could it be agreeable to their lordships to be fed from day to day with views of unprofitable successes—of imaginary advantages to be gained by our army, for ourselves or for our allies?—Let their lordships ask themselves the question—was there any man that heard him, who, in his conscience, believed, that even the sacrifice of the whole of that brave British army would secure the kingdom of Portugal; and if he received, from any person, an answer in affirmation of that opinion, he should be able to judge by that answer, of the capacity of such a person for the government of this country, or even for the transaction of public business in a delibe-

native assembly. By whatever circumstances, by whatever kind of fate it was, he must say, in point of fact, that, in his opinion, he always thought the object of the enterprize impossible: but now he believed it was known to all the people of this country, that it had become, certainly, impossible. Could any man who looked at our immense exertions for the last seventeen years—at those efforts we were making at the present time, and had still to make, in defence of our best and dearest interests—were this even a mere question of a million of money which the country was now about to expend through this measure, a feature in the business which his noble friend in his statements had very prudently suppressed; could any man say, that the expenditure of such a sum, amounting at least to a tenth of the income-tax, collected under such circumstances of privation, was not a subject of serious consideration and concern to the country?—A sum proposed to be expended, not to save the government of a prince who had abandoned his states, but to support the very vices which had been described as the cause of all the mischiefs of that government which, for two years, our army had been employed in forcing upon that country?—not, he said, to contribute to the advantage of the people of Spain; for the time, he believed, was lost, when our possession of Portugal could be of use to the Spanish cause—not for the advantage of this country, for she could derive from it no advantage whatever. Would it be too much, then, after all this, to ask of their lordships that one other million should not be wasted, where nothing short of a divine miracle could render it effectual to its proposed object?

So much he had observed on the question, as far as it was a financial one. But in other points of view the measure assumed a broader character. And, here, again, he must repeat, that no real advantage was to be gained by these visionary hopes of diversions, these schemes for animating the dead, either for the safety of individuals or collective bodies, who had placed their faith and confidence in our assistance. But this, it seemed, was a great political measure, and was so considered by his noble friend opposite, who thought it wisely and happily adopted. Would to God it were so! The great principle of the measure was this, that a Portuguese army, in British pay, combined with a

British force, was to be considered sufficient to defend Portugal against the armies of the enemy! It was farther recommended on the score of national honour. On the general principle of national honour he was sure that there was no man with the head or the heart of a real statesman, who did not believe that almost every thing valuable was connected with the observance of national honour. The general conduct of this country to Portugal had been actuated by an attention to the public honour; and when his noble friend praised certain parts of the ancient policy of this country towards Portugal, he thought that the instances he should preferably have selected for his praise were to be found, not so much where we had given our military aid, and promoted plans of fighting France in Portugal, but in our efforts for keeping Portugal secure from the dangers of invasion, and averting from her the necessity of a last and ineffectual appeal to arms.

He could assure their lordships, that though the measures he had thus emphatically alluded to, might not form the brightest pages of our annals, they were still of such a description, that they must be reflected upon with satisfaction hereafter, by those who might feel for the character of the country, so far as it depended upon the wise and politic conduct of persons entrusted with the management of public affairs. As to the case which had been stated by his noble friend, in support and justification of the measures of his Majesty's ministers respecting Portugal, he should be ashamed to waste the time of their lordships by dwelling upon it. He was truly sorry, and more especially for his noble friend's sake, that he had felt it necessary to refer to that case, as if either his noble friend, or any of their lordships, could suppose that there was the least resemblance between the situation of Portugal in 1806 and its situation at the present moment. If such were the impression entertained by his noble friend, he must say that his was a different opinion. But he thought it somewhat singular that a case, which had been uniformly and invariably the object of their unqualified reprobation and censure, should now have been made the subject of praise on the part of his Majesty's present servants. Praise, undoubtedly, he was ready to maintain that case was entitled to in an eminent degree; but the last persons from whom he should have expected to

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hear it so praised were those who had constantly and unalterably hitherto condemned it. He was glad, however, to find them now applauding what they before thought proper to reprobate; and he congratulated his Majesty's ministers, their lordships and the public, upon this even late return to the principles of truth and justice.

But there was one part of the case to which he had alluded, which had been passed over by his noble friend, and that was, that in the instructions given to the military commanders on that occasion, they were restricted from acting, unless they had a reasonable prospect of success; and here they came to the main gist and matter of the question of the present day. Would any one say, that in the present situation of affairs in Portugal and Spain, there was the least ground of rational expectation of success? In the former instance, France was fully occupied in another quarter; the situation of Europe was far different then from its situation, at the present moment; and there was at that period every reason to hope, that a manifestation of a determination to defend Portugal would have the effect, as it really had at the time, of delaying the attack upon that kingdom. Would any one say, in the present instance, that the British army in Portugal, aided by the native force which it was now proposed to provide for by a subsidy, would be sufficient to retard or finally to resist such an attack? What reliance could any man place on this subsidiary force, unaccustomed to the use of arms, unpractised in the operations of war, and wholly ignorant of military discipline, except the little they might have learned from a few British officers? That Portugal could be defended by such a force, was a thing absolutely impossible; and therefore it was that he perceived with regret, that a measure of such, not only questionable, but defective policy, should have been the first official act, as he might consider it, of his noble friend.

But to return back to the question. He had never denied nor attempted to deny, that Portugal presented a favourable situation from which to assist and encourage the efforts and the spirit of the people of Spain. His objection to the policy and measures of his Majesty's ministers, had always been, that the system of occupying Portugal with that view had been departed from; and that instead of keeping

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the British army in a concentrated state, in a commanding situation, and at all times applicable to any operations which might be undertaken with a good prospect of success, the British forces had been divided, and diverted to useless, or worse than useless expeditions. When the noble Secretary stated, that it was impossible for the British army to land at Corunna, he seemed to forget that that army which landed at Lisbon had been afterwards marched to Corunna, under circumstances of great calamity and disaster, in prosecution of an operation under all the circumstances of the case hopeless, which the able officer who had the command, had the candour to declare he disapproved of, and which terminated in the loss to the country of that highly distinguished general and thousands of his brave army.—But it was not his intention on that occasion to enter into the consideration of the proceedings during the campaign in Spain, as an opportunity for the discussion of that subject would afterwards present itself. It might undoubtedly have been a question whether it was desirable to station a British army in Portugal, a country which had at that time been abandoned by its prince, and left without any legitimate authority or regular government. He did not mean, however, to cast any blame upon the conduct of that prince, but imputed the whole of the calamities which followed, to the gross misconduct of his Majesty's present ministers. If the object of his Majesty's government had been to expel the French force from Portugal, it was not necessary for them to land a British army in that country for that purpose. In the situation of affairs at that time in Spain, it was the obvious policy of the French to concentrate as much as possible all their force in that country. It was, consequently, the true interest of this country not to drive the French corps out of Portugal into Spain, but to intercept it if possible, in any attempt it might have made to penetrate into that country. The absurdity, however, of the measures of his Majesty's ministers, in sending out commander after commander, each ignorant of the existing state of affairs, and neither bound to act upon any settled system of operations, led to the disgraceful convention of Cintra, by which, in place of weakening the French force in Spain, the British army was made the instrument of strengthening it: for this force, unfortunately, liberated by that luckless conven-

tion, arrived before the British forces in Spain, and took a part in the pursuit of our army in that disastrous retreat which terminated in the fatal victory at Corunna; fatal, he called it, and fatal he must ever consider it, because it was purchased by the loss of the able officer who had the command of the British army. Until that instance, there had never been known a case of three commanders having been sent out in the course of twenty-four hours, from different parts of the globe, and with different instructions to take the command of one and the same army.

It was unnecessary for him to dwell more at length upon the manner, in which the unwise and impolitic measures taken in Portugal had been conducted. But, if those who had the management of public affairs, had possessed any wisdom, any capacity for enlightened policy in the regulation of a nation's interests and constitution, any right or sound feelings with regard to the happiness of their fellow creatures, here most fortunately had been a wide field opened to them. They had got the possession of the kingdom of our ally, with its government dissolved, and no means existing within it, for the establishment of any regular authority or civil administration, but such as the British government alone should suggest. Here had been a glorious opportunity for raising the Portuguese nation from that wretched and degraded condition, to which a lengthened succession of mental ignorance, civil oppression, and political tyranny and prostitution, had reduced it. Was not that an opportunity, which any men capable of enlarged and liberal views of policy, and influenced by any just feelings for the interests of their fellow creatures, would have eagerly availed themselves of? Would not such men have seized with avidity the favourable occasion to rescue the population of that country from that influence of ignorance and political debasement which rendered the inhabitants incapable of any public spirit or national feeling. At that period there occurred a most favourable interval for the adoption of such measures, before the French could have re-entered the Portuguese territory over the bleeding carcasses of the patriots of Spain. Here was a task worthy of the greatest statesmen; here was an object in the accomplishment of which, there were no talents so transcendent, no capacity so enlarged, no ability so comprehensive, that might not have been well and

beneficially and gloriously employed. It was a work well suited to a wise and liberal policy; to an enlarged and generous spirit; to every just feeling, and sound principle of national interests, to impart the blessings of the free institutions of a free government to the inhabitants of a country so long oppressed and disgraced by the greatest tyranny, that had ever existed in any nation of Europe. In advertising to this state of the Portuguese nation, he did not mean to undervalue the services or the character of the Portuguese soldiery, whom he considered as possessing qualities capable of being made useful, though he could never admit that they would form a force competent to the defence of that kingdom.

In the comments, which he felt it his duty to make upon the measures and conduct of his Majesty's ministers respecting Portugal, it was by no means his intention to speak against any particular individual who, not being present, could not have an opportunity of answering for himself. He should, therefore, not mention the name, not make any remark upon the conduct of the person who had been sent out on that occasion, and who still continued his Majesty's minister in Portugal. He had known that individual, and though he entertained a sincere respect for him, he did not think that he was the most proper person to have been selected and sent out on such a mission. He considered it wrong in his Majesty's ministers to have employed that gentleman upon that occasion. But if he disapproved of that appointment in the first instance, he was much more disposed to disapprove of the manner in which the affairs of Portugal had been conducted or influenced since he had gone upon this mission, instead of giving to Portugal the advantage of a free government, instead of employing the British army in giving countenance and protection to such a system of civil liberty and national amelioration, that force had been employed in obliging the Portuguese people to submit to that odious and detestable form of government that was peculiarly and habitually obnoxious to them. Could their lordships, then be surprised that Portugal was at present in a state little better than when it was occupied by the French troops? Was it not the only object of astonishment and indignation, that nothing had been done to improve its condition; that no means had been taken to bestow upon that nation the blessings of a free constitution;

that no efficient measures had been devised to promote the object so much desired, and so strongly recommended by his noble friend, that of providing adequately for he immediate defence and ultimate security of Portugal?

But, upon this head, he must refer to the papers upon the table: papers, which many of their lordships might possibly not have read, nor consequently be acquainted with, but which it would be necessary to consult, before they could come to any just decision upon the question under consideration. Those papers, he must observe, were few in number. The first was a dispatch from Mr. Secretary Canning to Mr. Villiers, dated November 22, 1808. In this dispatch, that right hon. gent. called the attention of Mr. Villiers to the means of organizing a Portuguese force to co-operate with the British army in the defence of Portugal. He should not occupy their lordships' time by reading the particular words. Their lordships would however recollect, that it was some time in the spring of that year, that the spirit of resistance to the French usurpation had broken out in Spain; they would also recollect the time when the British army landed in Portugal; and they would then bear in mind that it was not till the 22d of November that the secretary of state called the attention of Mr. Villiers to the means of organizing a native force in Portugal. But after this tardy communication or instruction upon that important subject, it must be supposed that no delay was suffered to take place in following it up with further communications. Yet, no! The next dispatch, for no answer appeared to have been given to the former one, was dated as he found by the papers, on the 28th of February following. In that the right hon. secretary said "that as nothing had been received from Mr. Villiers on the subject of the Portuguese levies, and as no bills had come to this country on that account, it would be premature to say any thing upon that head." Their lordships would observe, that though the instructions had been sent out as early as the 22d of November 1808 no answer had been returned so late as the 28th of Feb. 1809, when the late secretary of state found it necessary to send out the dispatch from which he quoted the passage he had just read. If it could be urged as matter of charge against a minister employed as Mr. Villiers was, that he had deferred replying to an instruction on so important a



point, one should suppose that his language would be, that such a charge was a gross calumny, and that he had anxiously, from week to week, or from month to month, returned answers to his government at home, upon so interesting a subject. The first dispatch, however, from that gentleman was dated the 16th of December following. The whole of the important interval was suffered to elapse, without any effort having been made to promote a feeling of national honour; to create the means of assisting Spain; to raise the spirit, or re-establish the character of the Portuguese nation. His noble friend having been since called to the councils of his Majesty, had officially written the remaining document. It became the duty of his noble friend, upon entering upon his official functions, to consult the records of his office for such information as would enable him to give sound advice to his Majesty on the general conduct of his affairs. No question he was persuaded could be considered of more importance, than the question whether a British army should be employed in Portugal. His noble friend had stated, that it was not only necessary to employ a British force, and the native force to be maintained by the proposed subsidy, but also a Portuguese force, to be kept up at the expence of the Portuguese government, in that country. But, though a British minister had been nearly two years in Portugal, the noble secretary did not find in his office any information upon this subject. His noble friend, therefore was obliged to send a dispatch to Mr. Villiers, dated January 5, calling upon him for information in the following words: "you will therefore transmit to me, without delay, such information as you can collect, as well with respect to the state of the British army as that of the Portuguese force." So that in fact, the British minister was at this moment in complete ignorance of the state of that army which was to be relied on to defend Portugal. Whether any answer had been received to this dispatch he did not know; and, though sufficient time had elapsed to allow an answer to arrive from a place only four days sail from this country, he could only say, that there appeared no answer to it in the papers upon their lordships' table. If any answer had been returned to that dispatch, it should have been laid before their lordships, because it was essentially necessary that before their lordships agreed to the proposition for subsidizing a Portuguese

force, they should be acquainted with the state in which that force existed, and how far it was likely to be efficient for the purpose for which it was to be maintained. He must look upon it as impossible that his Majesty's ministers, after having been solemnly called upon by their lordships for the production of those documents, could have presented them in a garbled state. This he was obliged to conclude, as well in justice to them, as to the constitution, to that House and the country.

The noble secretary had engaged in the discussion under their lordships consideration, as if that House was to be called upon that night to abandon the cause of Spain altogether—to withdraw the British troops from Portugal—and to leave both nations to themselves. It was not his intention, however, to make any such proposition, the declaration of which would be as premature altogether as the voting the Address proposed by his noble friend.—What he had to say upon that subject was, that it would be criminal in their lordships to disguise or conceal what they had a knowledge of, that his Majesty's ministers had gone on too long in the practice of deceiving the public, by expectations which rested upon no solid foundation—by hopes, which there was no prospect of being realised—by reports and rumours, which, so far from resting upon any just ground or valid authority, were proved by subsequent information to have been wholly unsupported in truth or in fact. Their lordships were, by the determination of this question, to decide whether in the present arduous and difficult situation of affairs, they were to place further confidence in such men. They were by the result of that night's discussion, to shew whether the management of public affairs was to be entrusted to the discretion of men who had so conducted themselves, and so systematically deceived the public. They were then fully aware of the determination, that would be formed by his Majesty's ministers upon any great question of national policy or interest. If the subject of their consideration should happen to be of a military description, their lordships might be sure that they would consult military authorities; but they might also be convinced, that though every such authority should lean against their projected measure, ministers would still persevere. It would be unavailing for military men to say, that an operation was impracticable: his Majesty's minis-

ters would reply, "You may think it impracticable; but don't mind, go and try." It would be criminal in their lordships, therefore, so far as they may have the means of preventing it, to leave the administration of affairs in such incapable hands. For his own part, he did not so much object to the question as connected with political interests, or as a mere financial question of expenditure, but as it was likely to lead to the sacrifice, the useless—the unprofitable sacrifice, of the lives of thousands of his fellow-subjects. He had mentioned this point upon a former night, but so strong was his feeling upon it, that he did not think he could too often repeat the observation: It was for their lordships to consider whether, under all the circumstances, they would be disposed again to commit the British army under such guidances in Spain and Portugal. The campaigns in these countries had already cost this nation the lives of twelve thousand of its brave soldiers; and it was now to be considered whether any further sacrifice was to be incurred in the hopeless contest.

His noble friend had earnestly besought their lordships to bear in mind the blood that had already been shed, and the treasure expended, in order to induce them to agree to his proposition for making further sacrifices for the same object. He, too, would conjure their lordships, but for a different object, to call to mind the losses that had been sustained; not that they should go on in the fruitless profusion of lives and treasure, but that they should, whilst there was yet time, arrest the fatal progress of national calamity and disgrace. He should conjure their lordships not to lend themselves to such a system, in order that new millions should be squandered, that fresh thousands should be sacrificed; but to take care that no time should be suffered to elapse, before they obliged the government to pursue such measures as would be best calculated to promote the national interest, by enhancing the national character and honour. He particularly called upon their lordships not to suffer the remnant of our brave army to be exposed to the same disastrous fate which had befallen the armies already sacrificed. He trusted that their lordships would come to that determination which all, who felt for the hardships of our brave army,—who valued the lives of our valiant soldiers,—who were anxious for the honour and true interests of their country—must approve. They had but

to bear in mind the useless sacrifices which had been made without any possibility of any advantageous result:—the destination of sir John Moore's army to the North; when that general was of opinion that it should have been sent to the South of Spain:—the loss of 6,000 men in that calamitous campaign;—the loss of 6,000 more in the late campaign under lord Wellington; and all the fruitless waste of treasure that must have been incurred in both these disastrous campaigns. Were their lordships to be told, after all that had happened, that as his Majesty's ministers alone entertained any hope upon the result, they were still to go on in the indulgence of expectations of future success in Spain, and under that vain, that idle and delusive impression to expose still more of the valuable lives of British troops?

The Portuguese soldiers, upon whom so much dependence was to be placed, might perhaps hereafter become good troops, and be capable of acting in concert with regular armies. But when their lordships looked to the weak and imbecile state of their disorganised government;—when they considered that all the energies of the nation were extinguished by the spirit of that government in which the people could place no confidence, their lordships must be convinced of the total impossibility of obtaining any native force in Portugal, competent to effectual co-operation with a British army. When the British army had first entered Spain, it was to have been supported by a Spanish force of 30,000 men, but throughout the whole of its disastrous progress in that country, the British army experienced no co-operation. To expect, therefore, any effectual co-operation from a Portuguese army, in the case under consideration, would be to set all experience at defiance—to derive no benefit from the lessons they had received during the late operations—and madly to expose the best interests of the army and state to imminent but unprofitable hazard. Yet with such facts in view, the foundation of the proposition before their lordships was the expectation of that co-operation, which had not been experienced in either of the two former expeditions. But though so much was to depend upon the state, the amount and efficiency of this native army, the noble secretary was not yet acquainted with its actual condition. A force of 30,000 men was to be provided for; but it did not appear that more than 16,000 of them were actually in existence. Was it then to be supposed, that this small force

could, in the short interval between the present moment and the period when the trial would be to be made, be augmented to 30,000, and the whole advanced to such a state of discipline as to be fit to act in line with the British army? He would not deny that the Portuguese peasantry were well suited to assume the character and habits of soldiers; but as no one, even of the 16,000 already embodied, had ever seen an enemy, or was acquainted with the operations of war, he must be excused for thinking a force of that description not to be depended upon in the regular operations and progress of a campaign. They might be, as they had been, useful in desultory warfare; but must be wholly unfit for co-operation with a regular army. He was not afraid, therefore, of any responsibility that might be incurred, by his stating, that if the safety of the British army was to be committed on the expectation of such co-operation, it would be exposed to most imminent and perhaps inevitable hazard.

But if these 30,000 men were not composed of undisciplined peasants and raw recruits, but consisted of British troops, in addition to the British army already in Portugal, he should consider it nothing but infatuation to think of defending Portugal, even with such a force. He was aware it might be said, that Portugal, considered with respect to its geographical advantages, was capable of being effectually defended. He was not afraid, however, to assert, that against a power possessing the whole means of Spain, as he must suppose the French to do at this moment, Portugal, so far from being the most defensible, was the least defensible of any country in Europe. It had the longest line of frontier, compared with its actual extent, of any other nation; besides, from its narrowness, its line of defence would be more likely to be turned; and an invading enemy would derive great advantages from its local circumstances. As to the means of practical defence afforded by its mountains, he should only ask, whether the experience of the last seventeen years had taught the world nothing—whether its instructive lessons were wholly thrown away? Could it be supposed that a country so circumstanced: with a population without spirit, and a foreign general exercising little short of arbitrary power within it, was capable of any effectual defence? He should desire their lordships not to look at the experience of the last 17 years, but to the melancholy

events of the last month, and would then ask them, whether the defence of a mountainous barrier could afford any security against a powerful enemy?—Whether the barrier which had not protected Seville, would be effectual for the security of Portugal? The value of such defences no longer existed, and he was inclined to attribute that alteration to an actual change in the art and practice of war. The Alps, the Pyrenees, the mountains of Germany, and the Sierra Morena in Spain, of which they had heard so much, had all been successfully carried without presenting much difficulty, by the improved operations of modern warfare.

It was not to such defences, therefore, nor, indeed, to any defence, that they should look for the security of Portugal, unless the great mass of its population felt an interest in its preservation, and were resolutely determined to perish or defend it. He was ready however to allow that there might be occasions when it would be proper to make large pecuniary sacrifices, not alone for the support of an ally, but to prove to Europe, that we were ready to afford aid to any nation that was disposed to assert its independence. He would allow, that pressed as this nation was on all sides, it would be desirable to afford Portugal, if the question were only as to pecuniary sacrifices every assistance, provided it could be shewn that there was any rational or probable prospect of success. He would not only assist Portugal, but any particular bodies which may have been formed in Portugal, as far as could reasonably be done without committing the vital interests of this country. But here the question was, whether they should agree to the continuance of the British army in Portugal under hopeless circumstances? Disguise it as his Majesty's ministers may, the question really was, whether the army at that moment in Portugal was to be sacrificed as the army had been in the former instance? In the spring of the year, a force of 16,000 men was wanted; and yet his Majesty's ministers, notwithstanding their strong and unconstitutional measure for breaking up the militia, were unable to make out that number. He would ask their lordships, then, what would be the state of the British army, if the army under lord Wellington were to be exposed to the same fate as that of sir John Moore or of lord Chatham? and that too, in the prosecution of an object, in which, he would

venture to say, no man could possibly expect success. His object, as he had before stated, was not to propose any resolution to their lordships against the defence of Portugal. The amendment with which he meant to conclude, was the result of his own observation, and founded upon the reasons which he had stated to their lordships. When the documents which his Majesty had been graciously pleased to promise should be before them, then their lordships would be able to form a more correct judgment. If the past conduct of his Majesty's present ministers had been such as to justify their lordships in continuing to them a blind confidence;—if they were disposed to approve of the manner in which the military operations in Spain and Walcheren had been planned, then they would vote for the Address proposed by his noble friend; but, if they were influenced by a just sense of their country's interests, and an honest feeling for its character and honour, their lordships would, in duty to themselves, to our brave troops, and to the public, exercise their constitutional privilege of carrying up advice to their sovereign, and endeavour by such seasonable interference to arrest the imprudent and impolitic measures of his Majesty's present government. Upon these grounds he should move, to leave out all the words of the original Address after the word, "That," for the purpose of inserting an Amendment to the following effect:—"This House returns to his Majesty their thanks for his most gracious message, and for the communications which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to direct to be made to them; and beg to assure his Majesty, that they will, without delay, enter upon the consideration of these most important subjects, in the present difficult and alarming state of these realms."

The Earl of *Liverpool* considered the Amendment as a virtual motion for the removal of his Majesty's ministers. It would, indeed, be more becoming the noble lord as well as a shorter course to his object, to have embodied the substance and gist of his speech in a specific proposition to that effect. The motion of the noble lord went not only to the length of removing ministers, but even to oblige the country to abandon Portugal. What else was the meaning of those arguments their lordships had just heard? What else was the meaning of that appeal, of that dangerous and impolitic appeal to

the passions of the people, by displaying to them, in aggravated colours, the losses, the burthens they were called on to support? He would not deny, that in the course of the last 17 years, circumstances had occurred, which rendered an implicit adherence to the generally received and established principles of our national policy, a question of great difficulty. But nothing had arisen which, as far as regarded the ancient connection between this country and Portugal, would, in his apprehension, justify a sudden departure from that line of conduct which we had observed for a century and a half towards that power. He considered it impossible, that any noble lord, who impartially considered the circumstances under which the war began in the peninsula, should not cordially approve of the prompt and active assistance that had been given by his Majesty's government, to Spain and Portugal. The circumstances under which the war commenced there, formed a glorious exception to those that pervaded all the other nations of the continent. Spain was the first country that furnished an instance of a general rising of its population against the invasion and usurpation of the ruler of France. The French in other countries had to contend with great and numerous armies; but the moment these were overwhelmed, the countries were conquered. The people were every where neutral, and uniformly remained tame spectators of the contest that was to decide their fate. But in Spain, there was the hope of the support of a whole armed population—a hope which was not deceived in the course of two campaigns, fought under every circumstance of adversity and disadvantage. The state of the country too, was favourable to the expectation of that success, which the noble baron had so confidently pronounced to be unattainable from the first. It contained more strength of military position than any country in Europe. Besides, the state of manners, society, and morals within the peninsula held forth the most sanguine prospect of a general and obstinate resistance. The noble baron, in the course of his speech, having admitted, for the sake of argument, the policy of assisting the inhabitants of the peninsula in their efforts to shake off the yoke of France, still maintained that there was the grossest misconduct in the mode of affording that assistance. The noble baron particularly condemned the landing in Portugal. Upon

this point he could assure their lordships, upon the authority of several officers of rank and experience, and who were perfectly competent to give an opinion on the subject, that the very best point on which a disembarkation could be effected, and a lodgement made, was the Tagus; or somewhere between the Tagus and Cadiz, but in the Tagus in preference.

As to that brilliant and decisive operation, by which the French were expelled in three weeks from Portugal, the noble baron had not ventured to call the merit of it in question, though he pressed as a charge against ministers, and as a proof of their misconduct, that the French army was not brought to England instead of being sent home. But did the noble baron consider that the French had the means of retreat in their power; that they might have retired upon Spain? What would have been the situation of the British army, if, after rejecting the terms offered, we had been unable to reduce them to unconditional submission, and having wasted our force in unavailing efforts, we had at last found ourselves unable to expel them? With respect to the charges made against his Majesty's ministers, for not having animated their allies sufficiently to fight their own battles, he could positively state, that no exertions had been wanting on the part of government to rouse them to a sense of their danger, and to stimulate their exertions to avert it. Upon this point he could only say on the part of his Majesty's government, that they had never relaxed in their endeavours to awaken the government of Portugal to a sense of their perilous condition. It was not the fault of ministers, nor was it the fault of the person they had sent there as his Majesty's representative, (who, he would take that opportunity of declaring, had discharged his duty honestly, diligently, and faithfully) if the exertions of the Portuguese government were not correspondent to the danger and magnitude of the crisis. But he must intreat their lordships to recollect the particular state of Portugal at that time. Truly, indeed, might it be said to have been without a government; it was a country deserted, in fact; all the antient and established authorities having disappeared with the Prince Regent. But even under these unpromising circumstances every thing was done that could have been done. There was no time lost; there was no ex-

ertion untried; there was no measure neglected. The provisional government at the outset gave consent, at the instance of the British minister, that 20,000 men should be raised in Portugal, which were to be taken into British pay, and within a few months after 16,000 of these were actually in the field, and government had the positive assurance of Mr. Villiers that every man of them would be raised. With regard to that army, he had the satisfaction of knowing and stating to their lordships that every exertion was made by the Portuguese government to render it effective. Never were greater exertions made to provide a sufficient force, and never were they more successful. As to the objection that they had seen no service, every army must have a beginning. The noble baron had the candour to acknowledge, that in that country could be found as good materials as in any other, out of which to form an army, and it was to be hoped, when occasion called for their exertions in a military capacity, they would be found to do their duty. The motion of his noble friend went no further than to concur with his Majesty's Message in recognizing the policy of subsidizing a certain number of Portuguese troops.

If the noble baron was not inclined to concur in the principle of that measure, let him declare it; not by a side wind, not by an indirect attack on ministers, but by an immediate and explicit motion to withdraw the army from Portugal. If the defence of that country was of that hopeless and desperate nature that the noble baron conceived it, the sooner the army was withdrawn the better. The noble baron had talked as if war had not its chances and reverses, as if the risks in military operations, were not always proportioned to the magnitude of the object, and had triumphantly asked, what had they gained in the peninsula? What had they gained! Why they had gained the hearts and affections of the whole population of Spain and Portugal; they had gained that of which no triumphs, no successes of the enemy could deprive them. In Portugal such was the affection of the inhabitants, that there was not a want of a British soldier that was not instantly and cheerfully supplied. Look to Spain. What was the feeling of the people of Spain, even in that awful moment of national convulsion and existing revolution? It was that of the most complete deference to the British minister and government;

and so perfect was their confidence in both, that they placed their fleet under the orders of the British admiral. Would a cold, cautious, and phlegmatic system of policy have ever produced such proofs of unbounded confidence? Would indifference have produced those strong and signal proofs of affection? Whatever might be the issue of the contest in Spain, to this country would always remain the proud satisfaction of having done its duty. He trusted they would never abandon Spain, so long as any hope remained of the possibility of ultimate success. Their lordships were bound by every sentiment of honour and good faith to support a people who had given proofs of honour, of good faith, and of bravery, that have not been exceeded by any nation that has ever existed.

The Earl of Moira said, that if the question between the adoption of the Address and the Amendment were such as the noble secretary of state had assumed—if no other alternative was left than the abandonment of Portugal, or the rejection of the Amendment, he had no hesitation in stating, that he would be among the first to reject it. But the nature of the Amendment was quite misunderstood, or, if not misunderstood, misrepresented by the noble secretary. It appeared to him to call merely for inquiry, with a view to the adoption and arrangement of a different system of policy for the conduct of the war. If the system pursued by his Majesty's ministers had corresponded with his views, he should have continued to maintain it conformably to the sentiments which he had on a former occasion expressed upon the subject of Spain. Every moment's reflection, indeed, satisfied him of the justice of these sentiments—But yet the noble lord was not entitled to call on him for support, inasmuch as the conduct of his government did not correspond with those sentiments. The propriety of interfering in the concerns of Spain, and the manner of directing that interference, were quite distinct questions; and sorry he was to find, that much as he approved of the former, he saw nothing but what he must censure in the latter. Instead of encouraging and promoting the cause of Spain, that cause seemed in the measures conducted under the direction of ministers, but a secondary object. Instead of taking such a position in Spain as might afford, not only to the people of that country, but to any of the subjects of the enemy interested

in the same cause, a strong rallying point, our army was sent to an extreme point, where, in fact, it had scarcely to calculate upon meeting any formidable enemy.—Was this a course pointed out by wisdom or valour? What, he would put it to their lordships, should we say of the capacity of a Russian general, who, being ordered to invade England should effect a landing, and attempt even to establish himself in Cheshire, instead of approaching the centre of the country, instead of venturing to the vicinity of the capital? What would the Russian cabinet be likely to think of such an officer? Yet the course which, under our enlightened cabinet, the commander of our army took in the Peninsula, was precisely of a similar nature. He entered Portugal when he ought to have landed in Spain.

When Buonaparté had proceeded to attack Austria there were two lines of policy marked out for our ministers, neither of which, though obvious, did they think proper to follow. They ought to have promptly aided Austria, or availed themselves of the Austrian war to expel the French force from Spain. But instead of vigorously applying their means to either object, they attempted nothing that wisdom could sanction or the country approve. Every thing, indeed, which they did attempt was marked by imprudence and mismanagement; their whole career betrayed, as the universal opinion of the public pronounced, a total want of judgment, foresight and vigour; and, as the climax of error, they now seemed resolved to defend Portugal, according to a plan of defence, too, which was perfectly impracticable. For it was utterly ridiculous to suppose, that the ideas of the count La Lippe, as to the practicability of defending Portugal from invasion, could now be relied upon. In fact, nothing could be gained from the attempt, whilst the danger was certain. We should be allowed to retain Portugal, under our present system, just so long as Buonaparté thought proper. Yet the patrons of that system, the present ministers, still called for confidence; and amidst all the calamities accumulated under their auspices, they had still the hardihood to speak of having gained important advantages for the country. But I would ask, said the noble lord, what have they gained? The noble secretary of state boasts, that our country has obtained a higher character than it ever

possessed before in Europe; which, by the way, I deny. But I would ask him, Has he gained his object? Has he reduced the power of the enemy? If I were to ask a chess player whether he had won his game, and he were to answer me that he had got a rook, or that he had got a bishop, what should I think of his answer? Precisely as I do of that of ministers to this House; who, when asked whether they have won their game with the enemy, reply, that they have gained honour, laurels and fame; that still they are beaten—they have lost their game—they have played a desperate game for the last two years, and for the last two years they have gained nothing. Their administration has, in fact, been marked by the annihilation of every foreign hope, and the reduction of every domestic resource—they, who vaunted of their resolution and power to protect and liberate the continent, have only succeeded in bringing danger close to our own shores; and why? because they sacrificed the interests of the nation, and violated every principle of public duty to gratify their personal ambition, and personal cupidity. While they covered the country with their tax-gatherers and supervisors, who were almost as great nuisances as the plagues of Egypt, they aggravated the insults and injuries they inflicted upon the people, by most wantonly squandering the produce of their exactions. Yet, these were the ministers who called for confidence; while he was certain that he was speaking the language of 99 out of a 100 of the whole population of the country, when he asserted, that such ministers deserved marked reprobation and exemplary punishment.

Viscount *Sidmouth* was of opinion that government had neglected to avail themselves of the favourable opportunity for striking a decisive blow in the peninsula. He should feel much reluctance, however, at withdrawing our succours from Portugal, if without too great a risk we could assist her with any prospect of success. Her long attachment to this country, the sincerity of which had been so forcibly evinced at different periods, and most particularly in 1762, was such, that we ought to feel it incumbent upon us to afford her every assistance in our power. He was unwilling to accede to the amendment, as he thought it would be unjustifiable to withdraw our troops before such a measure became absolutely necessary. He

however thought they ought to be well informed as to the co-operation they were to expect on the part of the Portuguese. Government should be careful not to add to the weight of the burden already borne by the people; and to lighten the present as soon as possible. Though he could not bestow unqualified approbation on the measures of government with respect to the war in the peninsula, yet he would not withhold his assent to the address, and he thought his conduct both parliamentary and constitutional, when he declared that giving it his assent under this qualification, he threw the whole of the responsibility on his majesty's ministers.

The Marquis of *Lansdowne*, adverting to what had fallen from the noble viscount, who had just spoken, relating to the conduct of Portugal in 1762, wished to God the situation of affairs was as favourable for England as at that period. The government of that day had prudence, wisdom, and energy. The present ministers differed as much from them as the feeble government of Louis the 15th did from the energy of that government which now unfortunately wields the sceptre and resources of France. It was never good policy to copy our own proceedings on a former period, and regulate our conduct by geographical maxims when circumstances were changed. Were they, after the melancholy experience they had already felt, again to expose the army to new disasters, while yet mourning the 12,000 already lost? Were the remaining resources of the country to be entrusted to those who had wasted the former, and who now unblushingly called for renewed confidence? It was always bad policy to become principals in a continental war, and such we should be if the proposed force was to be kept up in Portugal. The army with which we were to co-operate was not to be depended upon. He could by no means agree in the praises that were bestowed on the Portuguese or on their armies. When did they shew themselves worthy of this implicit confidence, or abounding with this exuberance of affections? Was it at Vimiera, where they were not trusted with the conduct of a single operation? Was it at the time that sir John Moore marched into Spain, when he was obliged to weaken his army, and leave 10,000 men behind him at Lisbon, to keep the population in awe, and prevent them from rising on their own government? The noble secretary, who

made the original motion, had stated, that the breach by which the French entered Spain, was the vile government by which that country was delivered over to them, bound as it were hands and feet. But did the noble marquis know of no other vile government, and was not the same danger and consequences to be apprehended from it? But it was said, that the occupation of Portugal would delay the subjugation of Spain. How delay it? In the same way he presumed that the occupation of Walcheren retarded the submission of the court of Vienna. Was that occupation to be maintained without loss? No; we should there, as at Walcheren, lose one thousand every month. After our recent and severe losses, it was a question if humanity, policy, safety, and future existence would justify such an appropriation of our army, when not a single minister dared to say he thought the measure would be ultimately crowned with success. After our recent losses at Walcheren we ought not again to expose ourselves to the effect of a system so ruinous, at least without deeply reflecting, and having proper information on the subject, instead of assurances which had been uniformly lavished to deceive.

The Earl of *Harrouby* considered the opposition of the noble marquis as rather levelled against ministers than against the measure under consideration. If he wished ministers out of their places, why did he not call for their dismissal, rather than attempt to tie up their hands while in office. With respect to Portugal, if it was intended to abandon her to her fate, it would be better to give her notice at once of such an intention, that she might know on what she had to depend, and make the best terms she could with the enemy. Our sacrifices, he contended, had at least afforded our allies a better chance than they could otherwise have had in the unequal struggle, and if through want of talent on their part in the cabinet, or valour in the field, the cause was lost, England was not to be blamed. The calumnies that had been uttered, were, he thought, sufficiently refuted. The valour displayed by our troops had raised our national character, as the more recent our victories were, the higher we stood in the estimation of Europe, and the greater was our internal security.

Lord *Erskine* begged their lordships to reflect, that not merely the conduct of ministers, but that of their lordships them-

selves, was upon trial on this occasion; and the probable result of that trial, before an enlightened country, was entitled to the most serious consideration. Ministers, it appeared, pursued the old course upon this occasion. Instead of vindicating themselves they endeavoured to criminate their predecessors. But if their predecessors were really criminal, why did not these ministers who were in possession of every information and document referring to their official conduct, do their duty, and make that criminality the subject of prosecution? This, however, was not their object. They did not want to vindicate the cause of the public, but to get into our places; and how have they acted in those places? Their conduct, particularly in retaining Walcheren, after the main object of the Expedition was found unattainable, was most criminal. It was, I will say, as a lawyer, a murderous act. And yet they challenge, it seems, a motion for their dismissal. Such a motion is, indeed, suspended over their heads, and God knows it is of little consequence whether they are on or off. But as to the retention of Portugal, it is stated, that a native army is collecting in that country, and our money is to be sent there for its support. What fatality! There really seems to be a sort of predestination which I will leave to the reverend bench to explain, that whenever the French take any country or any prisoners, they shall have some of our money also. I can hardly account for the infatuation which possesses those men who suppose they can defend Portugal, by sending a supply of British money there. It might as well, in fact, be expected to accomplish that by sending over the woolstack with my noble and learned friend upon it. The noble lord concluded with stating his intention to vote for the Amendment.

The Earl of *Buckinghamshire* was of opinion that ministers had a difficult game to play, but that it was indispensable that they should not be impeded in their proceedings. The Portuguese campaign might terminate well or ill, but it was a claim on British honour, that Portugal should not be deserted; we had accepted from the prince the right of its protection, and we could not throw off the responsibility under which we had put ourselves, without proving that we had done our utmost to do our duty.

Lord *Holland* could not understand the spirit in which noble lords were willing to



give their confidence to ministers without being assured that their confidence was deserved. We were obliged in honour to do what we could for Portugal without injury to ourselves. In honour—for that was the only motive that ought to interest the feelings or excite the hearts of this or any other people. But if we were to embark in the cause of that sinking people, we were not to load them with our imbecility, in addition to their own weakness. A great plan was necessary: nothing neutral or narrow, nothing minute, nothing temporary, could enter into the principle of such a plan, but for this, qualities were requisite, which no man could hope for in the present ministry. He was averse to harsh language; but where was the address, the ability, the knowledge, the public spirit, that were the soul of success in such a cause? He found them shilling from object to object, and hanging their hope on every weak and bending support, that failed them in the first moment of pleasure. They cheered themselves with little circumstances. They first sustained themselves on the improvement of the Portuguese army, then on the free turn which their constitution was to receive. He thought, that for defence no government could be too free; by that he meant too democratic; the words might not be synonymous, but it was in such governments that men felt of what they were capable: there was then the full stretch of all the powers. There was a great struggle, a great alloy of the baser passions; but there rose from them a spirit vigorous, subtilized, and pure; there was the triumph of all the vehement principles of the nation; the rapid intelligence, the bold decision, the daring courage, the stern love of country. It was in the hour of struggle that men started up among the ranks of the shrinking people; those bright shapes of valour and virtue that gave a new life to the people; those surpassing forms of dignity and splendour that suddenly rose up as if by miracle, among the host, rushed to the front of the battle, and as in the days of old, by their sole appearance turned the victory. But where was the symptom of a love for free government in the conduct of the ministry? The government of Portugal had been absolutely in their hands, had they disburthened it of its obstructions to freedom—had they pointed its aspect towards democracy? It would be criminal to force a nation to a defence which might draw

down ruin on them. But if we were found to withdraw from the contest, it was possible for us to do so without degrading the country by any base avidity for little gains, by seizing upon any of those little pieces of plunder which were already so tempting and apt to overpower our resistance to the temptation. We might leave the country of our ally with the spirit of friendship and the purity of honour. It was of great moment to us, in even that meanest and lowest view in policy, to leave the people of the peninsula our friends, but we must be actuated by a higher principle, and be regretted and revered by those whom we were forced to abandon. He could not expect this from his Majesty's ministers, and, therefore, could not think their hands fit to wield the resources or sustain the character of the British Empire.

Earl *Darnley* supported the amendment. The ministers had almost destroyed three armies in the course of twelve months, and had within that period, and to little or no purpose, expended more of the military and pecuniary resources of the country than any of their predecessors had done in the course of ten years. Under these circumstances, their lordships could not give them their confidence in the further prosecution of this line of policy, without inquiry.

The lord Chancellor then put the question on the Amendment, when a division took place, and the numbers stood thus:—Contents 42; Proxies 52; 94.—Non-Contents 59; Proxies 65;—124: Majority against the Amendment 30. The original motion passed without a division.

#### *List of the Minority.*

##### PRESENT.

Gloucester	Dundas
Norfolk	Cassillis
Somerset	Holland
Stafford	Lauderdale
Lansdowne	Grenville
Grey	St. John
Spencer	Besborough
Rosslyn	Moir
Lucan	Ponsonby
Derby	Erskine
Donoughmore	Carysfort
Thanes	Lilford
Albemarle	Douglas
Hardwicke	Darnley
Essex	Carrington
Ilchester	Keith
Cowper	Argyle
Grosvenor	Ellenborough
Breadallbane	Bishops.
Headfort	Oxford
Bristol	Rochester.
Bethley	

## PROXIES.

Tankerville	King
Duncan	Fortescue
Ashburton	Carlisle
Devonshire	Cawdor
St. Albans	Blandford
Gratton	Eglinton
Bute	St. Vincent
Darlington	Cork and Orrery
Stawel	Somers
Scarborough	Ducie
Guilford	Hut-thinson
Berkeley	Wodegrave
Bolingbroke	Berford
Charlemont	Fitzwilliam
Townshend	Yarborough
Braybrooke	De Clifford
Mendip	Jersey
Crewe	Northampton
Anson	Upper Ossory
Carnarvon	Suffolk
Montfort	Hillsborough
Cholmondeley	Foley
Hereford	Auckland
Grey de Ruthyn	BISHOPS.
Glastonbury	St. Asaph
Shaftesbury	Lincoln.
Buckingham	

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, February 22.

[EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.] Exact-ly at four o'clock,

Lord *Porchester* moved that the order of the day for the House going into a Committee on the policy and conduct of the Expedition to the Scheldt be read.

Mr. *Wharton* could not think the conduct of the noble lord, and of gentlemen who sat on the same side of the House with him, at all consistent with the principles they professed. They boasted that they were actuated solely by a view to the good of the country, and he had no reason to doubt their sincerity, but at the same time they were for pushing on the Inquiry now before the House to the prejudice and delay of other important business, in which the public interest was deeply concerned. He took it for granted that their real object was the removal from office of his Majesty's present ministers. If that was a measure calculated to do good to the public, the advantage to be derived from it could only be of a prospective nature; while by the delay of other business requiring instant dispatch, immediate loss and inconvenience would be occasioned. There were now before the House for discussion, on this night, regulations of trade and revenue, which must be interrupted by acceding to the motion of the noble lord, and from such delay considerable

public inconvenience must ensue. Thus were the noble lord and his friends, while they professed to study and promote the public good, pressing on the Inquiry at certain detriment to the country. It could not, he submitted, signify whether the dismissal of his Majesty's ministers, which was with gentlemen on the opposite side the *summum bonum*, was carried at one time or at another; but if the Distillery regulations, which were by law to exist only for forty days after the meeting of parliament, and of which about thirty were already run, were allowed to expire, great inconvenience and detriment to the public would ensue.

Mr. *Whitbread* said, that in two points only he must coincide with the hon. gent., namely, that to-morrow was future, and also that his noble friend, and those who sat on the same side of the House with him, thought they had the good of their country at heart. He begged the hon. gent.'s pardon: he must agree with him in one other remark; that they wished for the removal of the present ministers. They did so, and not only did they desire their removal, but their punishment also. The hon. gent. said, it could be of little consequence when this was effected. When, however, they saw the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer associated with earl Chatham at the head of the Ordnance, and lord Mulgrave at the head of the Admiralty, concerting measures for sending out fresh troops to Portugal and Cadiz, was it not reasonable that they should desire to bring the inquiry so as speedy a termination as possible. They did not, however, wish that other business should be postponed. On the contrary, delay seemed altogether to be the object of the gentlemen on the other side, and a studied system of machinery seemed to have been adopted for this purpose. He begged to remind the hon. gent., that his noble friend was in possession of a vote of the House, giving the precedence to his motion, which vote had not been rescinded. It was somewhat remarkable to observe the unwillingness gentlemen opposite shewed to proceed in the inquiry. At ten o'clock the other night, their constitutions were so exhausted, they could not submit to have a few questions put to sir Eyre Coote; finding themselves, however, nearly run, one right hon. gent. the secretary for the Home Department got up and made a speech, which, having heard of such a thing as debating against time, he must

from the tone of enunciation, and every other character that belonged to it, have supposed to be one of this kind, till the right hon. gent. being warned by some of his friends that a miscalculation had been made, he sat down. The hon. gent. (Mr. Wharton) then (the hour being much farther advanced,) brought forward a number of Resolutions for Miscellaneous Services, not one of which need necessarily be called for till after Easter. And, at two o'clock in the morning, those same gentlemen, who, at 10 o'clock, while the Inquiry was proceeding, were dying with fatigue, found themselves perfectly able to proceed to the discussion of a number of Irish propositions. Now, at four o'clock in the afternoon, the noble lord called on the Chair to have the order of the day read. All they desired was to proceed in the Inquiry till eight o'clock, after which the other business might proceed without impediment. This was a point he must particularly assert; and he should see if the House of Commons having decided on the propriety of this Inquiry taking place at that particular time, were resolved to persevere in it, or were content to suffer an accused and suspected administration to defeat the Resolutions of that House.

Mr. *Stephen* did not consider this to be a question whether inquiry was intended or likely to be defeated. If he did he should readily concur in the motion of the noble lord, for reading the order of day. It was said, that one object of the inquiry was to turn out ministers; he believed there was another object which went hand in hand with it, namely, the placing certain other gentlemen in their situations. This might create an impatience natural enough on the part of the gentlemen who stood in this situation; but he could not consent, that, to gratify their feelings the whole public business of the country should be adjourned. When he was farther told that punishment was expected to follow, as well as removal from office, he felt himself still more imperiously called on, not to decide without the most dispassionate and impartial consideration. When the House heard that they might be called on not only to remove ministers from office, but even to impeach and punish them, they would see additional ground for calm deliberation, and feel convinced that they should not proceed rashly, or without having fully and maturely considered the evidence on which they were to decide.

Lord *G. L. Gower* thought the fair ques-

tion was, whether the House would support its own order for going now into the Committee? And he saw no fair ground of objection to it.

Mr. *Manners Sutton* did not suppose that the motion of the noble lord was made with the view to prevent the Distillery bill from coming on; the only question was whether the one or the other was most fit to be first discussed. The necessity of a speedy disposal of the Distillery bill must be apparent to every one. Was it clear that four hours would serve to exhaust the evidence of lord Chatham? Last night the evidence finished at ten o'clock, but then there was an after discussion of several hours; and did gentlemen not think that there might be the same sort of discussion to night as to the particular time at which it should come on again.

Lord *Porchester* declared, that next to the object of his motion for supporting the order of the House, was his wish to accommodate lord Chatham, for whose examination this day was set apart; and to whom he had given an intimation that his lordship's attendance would be expected. Lord Chatham had assured him, that the ill state of his health would not allow of a very late attendance. His lordship was now in the lobby, waiting to be called in. His own anxiety, therefore, was chiefly on account of lord Chatham, to whom an unnecessary detention till one or two in the morning would not be very kind; and this too, for no other purpose than to shew that ministers had influence enough upon a new division, to set aside an order of the House.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* could not consent to give a silent vote on the present occasion. His noble friend (lord *G. L. Gower*), he was satisfied, could not have been present at the beginning of the discussion, else he could not have thought the proposition of the noble lord opposite so very fair and reasonable. It might so turn out that the examination of lord Chatham might not be finished within the time appointed, and would it be consistent with justice to any of the parties, that the evidence should be interrupted the moment it was eight o'clock, probably in the midst of some important explanation?

Mr. *Turney* saw no cause whatever, nor any change of circumstances since last night, that could make it necessary to forego the order agreed on.

The House then divided upon the motion of lord *Porchester*.—For the motion 136 Against it 180. Majority 44.

[CORN DISTILLERY PROHIBITION BILL.] The House went into a Committee on the Corn Distillery Prohibition Bill; the Act for prohibiting the importation of spirits from Ireland, together with an instruction to extend the bill to Ireland, being also referred to the same Committee.

Mr. *Rose* then stated that the circumstances of England and Ireland were widely different. In Ireland there was a superabundant supply of grain; in England and Scotland it was quite the reverse. It was not therefore his intention to move that the bill do extend to Ireland; but in lieu thereof to move for the continuance of the act prohibiting the importation of spirits from Ireland.

Sir *J. Newport* opposed the motion, as contrary to the letter and spirit of the act of Union, and to the vital interests of Ireland. When by the Union Ireland was merged into the united kingdom, and contributed but about a sixth to the representation of the whole in the imperial parliament, he thought it would be grossly unfair that the great mass of the representatives returned for England should take upon themselves to construe the act of Union according to what they conceived the spirit of it, and which construction was always to the disadvantage of Ireland. The imperial parliament had never yet interfered to construe the act of Union favourably to Ireland, and in two markable occasions had construed it against the interest of Ireland. He had been represented as wishing to propose a war of prohibitions; he had only said, that it would be just as fair that Ireland should prohibit the importation of those manufactures in which England happened to have the advantage, as that England should prohibit the importation of every thing in which Ireland happened to have any advantage.

Lord *Hamilton* claimed precedence for the Resolution of which he had given prior notice, for extending the Bill for prohibiting the distillation from grain to Ireland.—After some conversation Mr. *Rose* acceded, and withdrew his motion for the present. The noble lord then moved a Resolution that the Bill do extend to Ireland. If there was such a superabundance of grain in Ireland his lordship asked, how it happened that special licences were granted to import grain into this country from France? The plan was in itself bad, and almost afforded an answer to the allegation. He wished

to know what ill effects had resulted from the two years prohibition in Ireland; and why there should be a different system in two countries united together? He could not reconcile to himself how two measures so contradictory should be adopted at the same moment in two countries so contiguous to each other, that the only difference in the expence of the article must consist in the cost of carriage; his lordship understood that even in Ireland the people were far from being unanimous against the restriction; and of this he was certain, that the populous manufacturing districts of the north of England and Scotland would be greatly injured if the prohibition did not extend to Ireland.

Mr. *Hutchinson* assured his noble friend, that he was misinformed as to the opinion of the people in Ireland on this subject. There was no one thing in which they were so unanimous as in their opposition to the prohibition now proposed to be extended to that country. The noble lord's proposition went to affect the vital interests of Ireland. The local interests of England were best known and would be best protected by those who were connected with particular districts. He must assert the same right for Ireland, and must contend that her interests were not to be sacrificed on account of the northern parts of this country, or the West India planters. He stated that in another respect, this matter was important, there being no fewer than 1,300 or 1,400 families who depended on this manufacture for a livelihood.

Mr. *M. Fitzgerald* spoke against the Resolution. The produce of this year in Ireland had been abundant; there was besides a great deal of old corn still in the granaries of Dublin, and distillation alone would afford an adequate encouragement to the agriculture of that country.

Sir *C. Burrell* declared his hostility to all modes of partial legislation, and thought it highly improper to oppose the interests of one part of the country to those of another. Should distillation from grain be allowed in Ireland, while prohibited in this country, the consequence would be, that the grain would go from this country to Ireland, and be returned in spirits, which would, at the same time defeat the object of the bill, and do injustice to the Scotch and English distillers.

Sir *R. Peel* thought the measure of exemption in favour of Ireland, was a violation of the Union, and that the same regard was due to the landed interests of this country, as to those of Ireland. The Union, he contended, had been of great benefit to the landed property of Ireland, land being now in that country worth one fourth more than before the Union. He was at a loss to know why Ireland, enjoying equal advantages from the Union, should not be treated in the same way as England or Scotland. It had been stated, that if exemption was not conceded to Ireland, the revenue of that country would be much deteriorated. This reasoning he thought went to shew that it was the wish of those gentlemen who resorted to it, that the poor people in Ireland should contribute the greater part of the revenue through the medium of spirits which had a tendency to destroy both their health and morals. He did not think that the superabundance of grain in Ireland had been sufficiently made out, else why was it not sent to this country at a time when government were affording every facility to the import of corn from the continent? If grain was really lower in price at present, than it had been in that country, was it proper to deprive the people immediately of that advantage, after the great privations they had been obliged to submit to? The interests of the West India planters was a very fair object of consideration; the intercourse between the West Indies and this country being a profitable traffic, in which no money was required from this country in return for the valuable produce of the West Indies, but such articles only as were the produce of our own trade and manufactures. Our importation of corn from the continent was an encouragement to France, and certainly under such circumstances it became our duty to husband our own resources.

Sir *J. Newport* sincerely joined in the wish that all distinctions between the two countries were destroyed, and the most free and complete intercourse effected. He admitted the principle that nothing was more pernicious than a continual interference with the corn trade, and had contended, on a former occasion, that the prohibition of distillation from grain was prejudicial to all parts of the Empire. He could not, therefore, now be accused of inconsistency in pleading an exemption for Ireland, when a scarcity of grain was

not pretended to exist in that country. A Petition on the table of the House from Waterford shewed, that in that city they had 100,000 quarters of oats, for which they could obtain no consumption, unless distillation was allowed. The farmers in that neighbourhood, as well as in many other parts of Ireland, were also overloaded, and in the interior of the country could have no market without the distilleries.

Mr. *R. Dundas* was hostile to the proposition made by the noble lord, though he agreed with many of the arguments that had been offered on the other side of the question. The truth was, that the agricultural were the only interests that ought not to be meddled with in Ireland, the reasons for which were obvious, though of such a nature as, in his opinion, ought not to be brought before the House. It was allowed that Ireland, from the redundancy of her crop, might supply her own distilleries. He therefore thought the exemption ought to be granted, though it was his earnest wish that the use of malt liquors were more generally introduced.

Mr. *Boyle* had concurred both in 1808 and 1809 in the restriction, not from any regard to the interest of the West India merchants, but from a conviction that in the circumstances of the country, shut out in a great measure from the Continent, and our relations with America appearing precarious, such a measure was essential to secure our own independence, and to guard against any probability of scarcity. Viewing the subject in that light, he thought then as he did now, that the prohibition should be universal. Had it not been for the importation, he had no doubt that the quartern loaf would have been at two shillings. A great part of the North and West of England, and the West of Scotland, depended in a great measure on Ireland for supply of oats, which was the food of the common people employed in manufactures, and during the last year that the exemption had been granted to Ireland, the supply from that country had been much less than in the preceding years. Not only was that the case, but he was assured that several persons had come over from Ireland last year, to make purchases in Scotland, after the expectation was entertained of having the prohibition removed. He would therefore suggest the propriety, should the exemption be thought expedient, of preventing the exportation

of grain from England or Scotland into Ireland, which he had too much reason to believe would be practised.

Mr. *Grattan* contended, that, from the evidence afforded by the petitions on the table of the House, it was necessary to admit that there was a superabundance in Ireland. There was at least no evidence to the contrary; and why should Ireland be deprived of the advantage of distilling from her own grain, not with a view to reserve the surplus for herself, but for the use of others? By denying the exemption, he contended that they would also ultimately injure the interests of this country, by discouraging the agriculture of Ireland, and eventually depriving this country of that source of supply.

Sir *W. W. Wynn* was against the prohibition altogether, but if such a measure were continued, he should certainly oppose any exemption. There was a great deal of barley in the country that would not malt for beer, from the bad condition it was in, but which might answer very well the purposes of distillation.

General *Turliton* did not wish to view the question as a local one, but one in which the interests of the whole empire were deeply involved. They had to feed Portugal, they had to feed the Portuguese government in the Brazils, and they had to support their army in Spain. In such circumstances it became them to be particularly frugal of their resources, and to prevent unnecessary waste of grain. He should therefore give his vote for the noble lord's motion.

Mr. *Leslie Foster* rose and said: Sir, the right hon. gent. who has just sat down considers the exemption of Ireland as a measure at best called for by her local interests, in opposition to the general interests of the United Kingdoms, and he further seems to think, that the mere circumstance of prohibiting the distilleries in this country involves in itself the necessity of prohibiting it also in the other. Sir, I differ from him on both these grounds; I think the question of the prohibition as it relates to Ireland, is to be determined by reasons totally distinct from those which are to determine the expediency or inexpediency of continuing it here, and it further appears to me that the repeal of it in Ireland, is called for by the general interests of the Empire more, if possible, than by the local interests of Ireland. It has long been the habit at least, if not the policy of this country to depend upon its

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neighbours; not merely for a portion of its sustenance, but for other supplies almost equally indispensable, and the ablest writers have demonstrated the general expediency of procuring them wherever we can procure them cheapest. But all their arguments assume the supposition that some foreign markets shall be open for us to resort to. A whole world closed against us, (at least almost all the productive part of it), is a circumstance which is neither presumed in their arguments, nor could have occurred to their imagination: a spectacle, however, which the awful times in which we live threaten speedily to realise, and with such a prospect before us, in all due deference to the opinions of the economists, I must contend that if we can procure our supplies within ourselves, even if increased expence is to be the consequence, it is a measure worth the purchase. If I thought that Ireland produced any thing approaching to her maximum of Corn, and that the question really was, now, whether Great Britain should eat or Ireland should distill, God forbid that for any petty considerations, we should withhold our utmost contribution; but convinced as I am on the contrary, that no one of these countries which have in their turns been characterised as the granaries of nations, but must yield in its powers of production to the hitherto almost untried and still unknown capabilities of Ireland if duly stimulated into operation, and that she presents to you a granary for all your wants if you only determine to employ it, I cannot refrain from protesting against that short-sighted policy, which for the sake of a present mouthful, would dry up the sources of future and permanent abundance. Where our judgment is so much to be determined by the extent of what Ireland can produce, it may not be improper the Committee should be informed that in the course of the last year, after supporting nearly 5 millions of inhabitants, she exported provisions of the value of about three millions sterling, exclusive of 800,000 quarters of corn supplied to this country, and of probably a still greater quantity consumed in her private distilleries, notwithstanding your prohibition: and I will appeal to every person who has seen the half cultivated fields of Ireland, whether he can entertain a doubt, that if they had the benefit of only the same degree of agriculture which adorns the face of this country, they would produce twice or threefold what is obtained

from them at present. I say this of that portion of Ireland already under cultivation, but if we extend our view to her waste lands, not like the waste lands of this country, of difficult or doubtful reclamation, but presenting not merely a capability but an aptitude peculiar for the production of those very articles of which you have the greatest necessity, a far more extensive prospect opens on us. A commission was most wisely appointed last year to enquire into this subject, and as the real extent of the productive powers of Ireland appears to be the true point on which the question before us is to be determined, it may not be improper that I should now inform the Committee that I have already seen enough of the execution of that commission to have formed a confident expectation, first, that less than one sixth of the despised bogs of Ireland is not only capable, but peculiarly calculated for the production of the 38,500 tons of hemp, the staple of your navy, and for which in the last year the accounts are made up, you paid above 1,900,000*l.* to foreign nations: secondly, that somewhat more than another sixth would supply the 168,000 hogsheads of flax-seed, and the 20,000 tons of flax, and the articles of flaxen produce, for which in the same time you paid above 2,600,000*l.* to other countries; so that one third part of the wastes of Ireland would at once give you all the hemp and all the flax for which you are at present at the mercy of foreigners; and give 4 millions and a half in each year to the industry of Ireland, at present applied to reward the labours of our enemies. The remaining two thirds of these lands, if they should prove to be applicable to the production of corn, would produce three-fold of all that quantity which we spared to you last year; or if they should prove capable only of being converted into pasturage, still the effect would be the same, by setting free for the production of corn an equal quantity of the rich lands of the south at present occupied by cattle. With such prospects before us, and such means within ourselves, I cannot express how I deplore that unsteady policy with which we appear to me to look round the world as it were and to put our trust in smugglers and in pirates, to purchase or to filch for us, from doubtful friends or declared enemies, the sinews of our strength and the means of our existence. For instance, consider the hemp which I have alluded to, for that we long depended upon Russia; when

we lost her good graces, we turned next to the smugglers of the Adriatic, and now that their hemp, bad in its quality, is further become precarious in its supply, we are to look, I understand, for this staple of our navy to fields at a distance of 13,000 miles, to reward the industry of Indian labours, and to be guarded by the allegiance of an Indian army. In the same manner where have we not looked for flax, the favourite production of the Irish soil? How much cheese and butter are we indebted for to Holland? it has been stated, I believe truly, to the amount of millions within these few last years.—And finally, what I must consider as the climax of impolicy, are we not at this moment importing corn from France; yielding a direct revenue to Buonaparté on its export so long as he shall chuse to supply it, but crowning him with a rod of scorpions to be used against us, whenever real necessities may tempt him to withhold it.—Sir, I say instead of this system, or this want of system, look to Ireland, make her your granary and your storehouse, consider her capabilities, but consider also how long she has slumbered over them, that they are of very recent development, that they have been elicited principally by the very necessities which have forced you to call upon her, and that she will slumber still unless you awaken her, and therefore spare no source of demand that can stimulate her industry. If you cut off the demand it is in vain to hope for a continuance of supply; and so convinced am I of this, that if any one could point out a third species of demand for corn in addition to the call for food and the call for distillation, I would hail him instantly as a friend to Ireland, but as ultimately an avenger of famine from Great Britain. On these grounds I feel myself justified in saying that the interests of the empire forbid our prohibiting the corn distilleries of Ireland; but let us now look to her local interests. Sir, I say that as a matter of revenue it is impossible that Ireland can afford it. At the time of the Union the clear revenue of Ireland paid into the Exchequer was, 3,007,000*l.* In the year ending 5 Jan. 1808, being the last year in which we had the advantage of corn distillation, it had been raised to 4,769,000*l.* of which 3,420,000*l.* was required to defray the charge of the debt of Ireland, leaving free towards her quota of contribution 1,349,000*l.* That quota was, and is, above six millions per annum, and to de-

fray it, we have nothing but this 1,349,000*l.* and what we can borrow on the strength of it. And the Committee will judge how far we can afford to give up a whole million of this by the loss of the corn distillation. Sir, I say that in the most favourable view that it is possible to take of the prohibition, it occasions the loss to us of near a million of revenue; for the distilleries from corn produced in the last year of this operation no less than 1,236,000*l.* of spirit-duty; to this must be added 500,000*l.* more of malt-duty, by the recent law to be charged upon the spirit, making in the whole 1,736,000*l.* annual produce of revenue from the corn distillation. Against this what have we now to set? nothing but 210,580*l.* being the total produce of revenue from the distillation of sugar, and 589,000*l.* increase of duty on the sugars and foreign spirits imported into Ireland, leaving still a deficit of above 936,000*l.* per annum. In what manner do the gentlemen of Ireland think their Chancellor of the Exchequer can make up the deficiency? If the window tax was to be quadrupled, and the carriage duty, house tax, horse tax, dog tax, and servants tax were to be multiplied tenfold, all put together would fall short of the produce of corn distillation. Do they hope she is to make it up by new taxes from the customs? His hands are tied up there by the act of Union: or from the malt duties? they think them high enough already: upon the stamps? they already produced nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the stamps of Great Britain, and can hardly be carried higher; and therefore it is that the distilleries have ever been considered as the chosen field for an Irish chancellor of the Exchequer to exercise whatever he possessed of ingenuity, as affording him the sole hope for the accomplishment of his task. Another consideration is the absolute futility of the prohibition. Sir, it is the unfortunate, the mischievous, and the peculiar character of this measure, that while it suffices abundantly to produce the evils of which we complain, it is totally unable to operate the good which you desire. Distillation we will have, revenue from it you may give up. An hon. bart. seems by his gestures to understand me as avowing a combination between my right hon. relation and the private distilleries to defeat the distillation of sugar, I beg not to be so misunderstood; it is in vain for gentlemen connected with the West Indies to affect to consider the abundance of

illicit distillation in Ireland as proceeding from the remissness with which the laws for its punishment are enforced. We have evidence enough on our table both of the abundance of the offence and of the severity of its punishment. You have, I believe, about 13 stills in England, we have, in spite of the prohibition, just as many hundreds in the single barony of Newishaven. I should rather say we had, for 1,300 was their number previous to the prohibition of their licensed competitors, how many there are at present, I dare not attempt to calculate. Now as to the means taken to suppress them; it is equally in evidence upon the table, that this barony was invaded on all sides by regular columns of the army, his Majesty's cruisers co-operating by sea, and that the seizure of above 100 stills in one day was the fruit of the combined operation; and we see the gentleman who commanded these invading forces, and who united in his own person the triple character of the soldier, the magistrate, and the exciseman, at once the informer, the judge, and the executioner, glorying in the desperate wounds which he had received in such campaigns. But is this a manner in which this House can desire or can endure that the British constitution should be administered to their Irish fellow subjects? Sir, it is so administered no longer; but even under such a system, let me observe, that the distilleries of Newishaven continued their operations, and even now that this violence is discontinued, there are papers on your table of which, even before the close of this week, the House will hear as much as it can desire, complaining of the rigour and severity with which the distillery laws are enforced. Sir, the truth is, that they are now executed with as much energy as consists with not totally abandoning every idea and every semblance of a free constitution, and it is in my mind one of the most odious features of the prohibition that converting every iron pot into a coining instrument, and overwhelming the peasant with temptation, it secures the infraction of the law, and the consequent punishment and dissatisfaction of the subject. Another view remains of this matter; we are told it is a relief to the West Indies; Sir, there is no one more sensible than I am of the difficulties imposed on the gentlemen connected with these islands. I know that there is in no other part of our dominions so large a



capital producing so low an interest; no where so small a private income, producing so great a public revenue. And I would go as far as any member in this House, to consider Great Britain and Ireland and all their dependencies, as one integral whole standing united against the united world; and if the circumstances of war inflict a pressure in one part, which any others can alleviate by bearing a portion of the weight, I think it is but fair that we should assist each other, and I would even not wish to weigh in golden scales the amount which Ireland might be called on to sustain; but still there must be some limit in the apportionment, something like fairness in the proportion of the weight to be imposed, and the burden to be taken off. And when I see, as in the present instance, so monstrous an oppression prepared for Ireland, to produce so ridiculously trifling an alleviation of the misfortunes of Jamaica; or rather no alleviation whatever, for it is a fact, which, but that I state it from papers which cannot err I should fear was too paradoxical to obtain me credit from the Committee, but it is a fact, however curious, that in the last year, when you compelled us to consume sugar in our distilleries, we have imported less sugar into Ireland than in the year immediately preceding, by 3,500 hogsheads. Sir, if we had imported a quantity greater by 3,500 hogsheads, it would be an encrease which the gentlemen of the West Indies would spurn to acknowledge as an obligation, but when it is actually a decrease, it seems to throw a ridicule upon the whole project; it compels us to cry out, this is too monstrous to go on; we cannot consent to abandon the revenue, and to sacrifice the agriculture of our country to produce such a result. It is what the moderation of West Indians cannot expect, what the spirit of Ireland never can submit to, and what the impartial justice of the British Parliament never can inflict.

Mr. *Western* could not concur with the motion of the noble lord. Though the measure of prohibition met with his approbation, and became necessary in the present state of the corn-market, there was, however, a considerable quantity of damaged grain in the country, unfit for general use; and this grain, he conceived the permission to distill in Ireland would take out of the market, and give the farmer in this country an opportunity of disposing of it both to the public, and his own

private advantage. Of this sort of grain, there was a great deal, particularly in Norfolk, and he had no doubt in many other parts of the country. He approved likewise of the exemption, as it afforded a pledge that the measure of prohibition was only temporary, and not extended as a permanent regulation.

Mr. *Fuller* approved of the motion, and recommended to the gentlemen of the sister kingdom, if they wished to improve the agriculture of the country, to reside more upon their estates, and shew more kindness and cordiality to the people, instead of kicking and beating them about. He never decided upon any question without informing himself upon it, as well as he could at least; and he always found it the safest way to be guided by the sentiments without doors, rather than the professions made within. If an honest man, unconnected with either the party that wanted to get in, or the party that wanted to stay in, was anxious to know the real state of the case, he should be (said Mr. *Fuller*) equally indifferent to what fell from your side (pointing to the Opposition) and to what fell from your side, (pointing to the Ministerial), but go out of the House, and consult with honest, impartial men like himself, to enable him to form a just and fair decision.

The Committee divided upon the noble lord's Resolution, when there appeared, Ayes, 68; Noes, 110; Majority 42.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Friday, February 23.*

[LINCOLN'S INN BENCHERS—PETITION OF MR. FARQUHARSON.] Mr. *Sheridan*.—Sir, I rise to present the Petition of a gentleman of the name of Farquharson, to which I request the particular attention of the House. I present it with great reluctance, because it contains a grave and serious charge against a respectable body of men, the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn, and alleges, that they have committed an act of grievous and unwarrantable oppression. The Petition states, that the Benchers of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn have violated the principles of the constitution of the united kingdom, and have usurped the powers of the Legislature, by making a certain rule or bye-law to the following effect:—"1807. That no person, who has written for hire in the newspapers, shall be admitted to do exercises to entitle him to be called to

"the bar."—Now, Sir, I am not meaning to dispute the title of the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn to make individual objections to the admission of any person into their society, whom, upon just grounds, they may deem to be unfit to be called to the bar; but I do contend, that any general sweeping rule of this sort, applied to any particular class of men, and tending, as it necessarily must do, to degrade that class in society, is not only oppressive, and illiberal, and illegal, but is also unconstitutional. If it was merely oppressive and illegal, this would not be the place to which the parties aggrieved ought to resort for redress. I contend, that though this bye-law is most illegal, it is likewise unconstitutional, and that against it there is no other mode of redress, but by an appeal to this House; the Society, whatever description it may have, or however it may be constituted, not being that kind of corporation against which any person can have a remedy by appeal to the Court of King's Bench, or by *Quo Warranto*. As I mean to take up this important subject on a future day, I shall, at present, barely observe, that if the principle recently adopted by this Society had been acted upon at a more early period, it would have excluded from the bar men who have been an ornament to the profession, and would have prevented many persons from having a seat in this House, who have been an honour to the legislative body. There is one other thing I wish to mention: the person whose petition I present, has written a series of letters upon this subject, which appeared in a respectable Morning Print, "*The British Press*," and have since been re-published in the shape of a pamphlet. I have seen and discoursed with the writer of those letters, and he is now perfectly convinced that he was wrong in supposing the Lord Chancellor was the author of the measure of which he complains. He is thoroughly persuaded that the Lord Chancellor has too much liberality to have originated any such proceeding, or to have had any thing to do with the matter: I am proud to state this circumstance, because I should be sorry that it should for a moment be supposed, that his lordship was capable of giving his sanction to such a transaction; and I have to add, that the Lord Chancellor is in no respect privy to, or accountable for, this rule or bye-law having been affixed in the hall in which he holds the Court of Chancery.

The Petition was then brought up and read. It was in these terms:

"To the hon. the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled. The Humble Petition of GEORGE FARQUHARSON, of Great Charlotte-street, in the Parish of Christ Church, in the County of Surrey, Gentleman;

"Sheweth;—That your Petitioner, as a subject of the United Kingdom, by birth, is, and claims to be, entitled to all the rights, civil and political, which are, or have been, heretofore, enjoyed by the people of these realms, under the reign of his present most sacred Majesty, and the reigns of his royal and illustrious Predecessors.—Your Petitioner humbly submits, that the government of the united kingdom knows no distinction of Persons—that all conforming to the laws are alike the objects of its attention, and that no class of men can, without an infraction of the spirit and essence of the British constitution, be deprived of any of their rights, civil or political, by the act of writing for the newspapers, which are published in this free country.—That, some time previous to the year 1807, your Petitioner was a writer for several of the newspapers, and, from his literary exertions in that capacity, derived considerable emoluments. And your Petitioner humbly suggests, as the result of his information and belief, that some of the most accomplished scholars, eminent lawyers, and enlightened statesmen, who have ever adorned society, or sat as representatives of the Commons of the united kingdom, in your honourable House, have been persons who, in the early period of their lives, have written for hire in the newspapers, and other periodical publications.—That the benchers of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn, have, as your Petitioner submits, violated the principles of the constitution of the united kingdom, and usurped the powers of the legislature, by making a rule, or bye-law, to the following effect:—'1807. That no person, who has written for hire, in the newspapers, shall be admitted to do exercises to entitle him to be called to the bar.'—That your Petitioner lately made application for the purpose of entering his name, as a member of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn, and studying the law in that society, with the view of being called to the bar; but he was informed at the office of the steward of the

said society, that he could not be admitted, in consequence of such rule, or bye-law, which excludes the class of men, therein designated, from doing the exercises that are to entitle them to be called to the bar;—and your Petitioner humbly submits to the judgment of your honourable House, that such rule, or bye-law, is an arbitrary and unconstitutional proceeding.—Your Petitioner, therefore, solicits the attention of your honourable House to the subject of his complaint, and humbly prays, that you will grant such relief as to your honourable House, in its wisdom, shall seem meet. And your Petitioner shall ever pray, &c.

GEORGE FARQUHARSON."

The Petition was ordered to lie on the table and Mr. Sheridan gave notice that on Friday next he would submit a motion to the House, grounded on it.

Mr. H. Martin.—I wish to make a single observation upon the subject of this Petition. I am one of the Benchers of the society of Lincoln's-Inn; but I do assure the House, that, so far from approving of this resolution, it was passed absolutely without my consent. I am, and ever was of opinion, that there ought to be no objection against any person being admitted to the bar, but an objection founded on his moral character. This is the only restriction which shall ever have my concurrence. I have to add, that this regulation has been sent to all the other Inns of Court, and that every one of them has refused to adopt it.

[PETITIONS FROM ROMAN CATHOLICS OF ENGLAND.] Mr. Windham, after a few pre-fatory observations, presented a Petition from the Roman Catholics of England, setting forth, "That the Petitioners beg leave to represent to the House, that, at the time of his Majesty's accession to the throne, the laws in force against his Roman Catholic subjects deprived them of most of the rights of Englishmen, and of several of the common rights of mankind; and that, by the acts of the 18th and 31st years of his Majesty's reign, several of the penalties and disabilities under which the English Roman Catholics laboured were removed; and that the English Roman Catholics are most grateful for the relief granted them by those acts, and have taken and subscribed the oaths and declarations contained in them; and that their conduct hath been conformable to their professions; In peaceable submission to the laws, and in the discharge of moral or civil duty, they have not been

exceeded by any of his Majesty's subjects; they have served him effectively and honourably in his fleets and armies; there never has been a call upon Englishmen to do their duty, which the English Roman Catholics have not been forward to answer; and that several penal and disabling laws are yet in force against them: They are not equally entitled with their fellow subjects to vote at the election of any member of the House, and they are excluded from a seat in either House of parliament; they are not admissible into corporations; every civil and military office is denied them, every laudable object of ambition, all that elevates a man among his fellow subjects, all hopes of public distinction, all means of attracting the notice of their country, or the favour of their sovereign, are placed without their reach; and the more they deserve of their country, the more sensibly their country makes them feel this exclusion: In the ranks, she suffers them to fight her battles, but to them victory is without its reward; promotion is wholly denied them; no services can advance, no merit enable them to meet their country's favour; and, even in their humble situation of private soldiers, the law follows them with pains and penalties; and, by the articles of war, if soldiers refuse to attend the religious worship of the established church, they are punishable by fine, imprisonment, and death: Thus the English Catholic soldiers are incessantly exposed to the cruel alternative of either making a sacrifice of their religion, or incurring the extreme of legal punishment, than which the Petitioners humbly conceive there never has been, and cannot be, a more direct religious persecution; and to an alternative equally oppressive the English Roman Catholics are exposed on their marriages: The law requires for the legal validity of a marriage in England that it should be celebrated in a parish church; as Roman Catholics believe marriage to be a sacrament, the English Roman Catholics naturally feel great repugnance to a celebration of their marriages in other churches than their own; and they are cruelly debarred from any means which their fellow subjects possess of providing for their families by employments of honour or emolument, so that, while they bear their full share of the general contribution to the wants of the state, they are denied even a hope of participating in those advantages by which the burthen of their fellow sub-

jects is alleviated; and in other occurrences of life, the law has the same humiliating and depressing operation on the Petitioners: Thus every Roman Catholic subject of his Majesty is forced below his fair line in society, and the general body is a marked and insulated cast, yet the Roman Catholics form more than one fourth of the whole mass of the subjects of the United Empire: Whatever there is of genius, of talent, or of energy among them, is absolutely lost for public use, and this at a time when the United Empire is engaged in a conflict formidable beyond example; and it therefore seems important, if not essential, to her preservation, that she should call into action, without qualification or limit, or any religious test or declaration, the genius, talents, and energies of all her subjects: It is true that the Petitioners profess some religious principles which are not professed by the established church, and to this, and to this only, their refusal of certain tests, oaths, and declarations is owing, which subjects them to the pains and disabilities they complain of; but none of the principles which occasion their refusal affects their moral, civil, or political integrity; and the Petitioners humbly submit to the House, that no principle which leaves moral or political integrity unimpaired is a proper object of religious persecution; besides, the whole creed of the Petitioners was once the creed of the three kingdoms; it is the actual creed of four fifths of Ireland, and of much the greater part of Europe: It was the creed of those who founded British liberty at Runymeade, who conquered at Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt: among those who repelled and annihilated the Spanish Armada none bore a nobler part than those by whom this creed was professed; and in all those achievements, in every other scene in which the ancient valour or ancient wisdom of this country has been displayed, the ancestors of several of the Petitioners have been distinguished; their creed did not lessen their zeal for their king and country, it does not lessen that of their descendants; and every disloyal or immoral principle, which malice or credulity has imputed to them, the Petitioners have solemnly and repeatedly disclaimed; they believe there does not now exist an honourable man who imputes these principles to them: they have sworn to be faithful and bear true allegiance to his Majesty, and have acted up to their professions;

they most confidently appeal to the House and to the whole empire, whether in loyalty to his Majesty, attachment to the constitution, or zeal for their country's good, they are not equal, and are not universally known and acknowledged to be equal, to his Majesty's other subjects; therefore, conscious of the truth of these representations, and with the most perfect reliance on the wisdom and justice of the House, the Petitioners humbly pray for a total repeal of every test, oath, declaration, or provision, which has the effect of subjecting the Petitioners to any penalty or disability whatsoever on account of their religious principles."

Another Petition of the several persons whose names are thereunder written, Roman Catholics of England, was also presented to the House by Mr. Windham, and read; setting forth, "That the Petitioners beg leave to represent to the House, that themselves, in common with the general body of English Roman Catholics, have lately signed a Petition to the House stating the principal grievances under which they lie in consequence of their religious principles, and praying relief: and they now beg leave further to state to the House, that the English Roman Catholics, in soliciting the attention of parliament to their Petition, are actuated not more by a sense of the hardships and disabilities under which they labour, than by a desire to secure, on the most solid foundation, the peace and harmony of the British empire, and to obtain for themselves opportunities of manifesting, by the most active exertions, their zeal and interest in the common cause in which their country is engaged for the maintenance of its freedom and independence; and they are firmly persuaded that adequate provisions for the maintenance of the civil and religious establishments of this kingdom may be made consistently with the strictest adherence, on their part, to the tenets and discipline of the Roman Catholic religion; and that any arrangement, founded on this basis of mutual satisfaction and security, and extending to them the full enjoyment of the civil constitution of their country, will meet with their grateful concurrence."

And the said Petitions were severally ordered to lie upon the table.

[EARL OF CHATHAM'S NARRATIVE.] Mr. *Whitbread* in rising to make the motion of which he gave notice, observed, that as many more members were then present

than were in the House when lord Chatham's examination before the Committee closed on the preceding evening, he would state some circumstances which occurred at that period. Those hon. members, who were present last night, would recollect, that lord Chatham had been questioned relative to the Narrative which he had thought proper to present to his Majesty, and which had subsequently been produced in the House of Commons. They would recollect that the noble lord had also been asked, whether he had on any prior occasion presented to his Majesty any other narrative, paper, memorandum, or memorial, relative to the Expedition to the Scheldt. They would recollect, too, that after the noble lord had been repeatedly questioned on this subject, he at length declined to give any answer to the inquiry. This certainly was a circumstance which induced a strong suspicion that the noble lord had presented to his Majesty some document upon the subject before the delivery of that which had been placed on the table of the House. Lord Chatham however, standing at the bar as a peer of the realm, the Committee could not press upon him a question which he did not choose to answer; but it was in the power of the House to address his Majesty for the production of such a paper, if it existed. He did not think it necessary to trouble the House at any great length on the subject of the motion he meant to submit, the merits of which appeared to him to lie in a small compass, and to which he could not conceive the possibility of objection. On the 27th of January, the House resolved to institute an Inquiry into the policy and conduct of the Expedition to the Scheldt. On the 16th of February, a gallant officer, whom he did not then see in his place, a private friend of lord Chatham, (General Loft), proposed to the House to address his Majesty for the production of a Narrative given in to his Majesty by lord Chatham, which that gallant officer stated he knew to be in existence. On the first day of the session, in the speech from the throne, his Majesty declared that he would direct all the papers that would be necessary for the satisfaction of the House on the subject of the Walcheren Expedition to be laid on their table. In the papers, however, which were in consequence laid on the table, lord Chatham's Narrative was not included. In point of fact, it did not then exist, and in point of fact his Majesty's

ministers did not know the contents of that Narrative until after it had been presented by lord Chatham to the King. The motion which had been made by the gallant officer for the production of this Narrative saved him (Mr. W.) a great deal of trouble on the present occasion; for, whatever had been his opinion of the propriety of calling for papers which were given to his Majesty personally, the House had voted that the thing might be done, and upon this impression they called for and obtained the Narrative.

Nothing according to his view of the case, could be more objectionable than the general principle, upon which a person placed in the situation of lord Chatham, having been in the command of an Expedition, and having access to the King as a privy counsellor, used that privilege for the purpose of putting into the King's hand a paper reflecting on the conduct of the officers associated with him in that enterprise. He called upon the House to consider the circumstances in which lord Chatham stood. The noble lord having acted in conjunction with sir R. Strachan in the command of the Expedition, arrived in England before the termination of the Expedition, and on such his arrival his distinct military command, of course, ceased. In all the public dispatches from the noble lord, not a single insinuation was to be found against the navy, nor any imputation cast upon the gallant officer who commanded that branch of the service. On the contrary, lord Chatham had in those dispatches expressed his most unqualified approbation of their conduct. In the Journal which had been presented to the House, adverse winds and unfavourable weather had been distinctly stated as the cause that parts of the naval service had not been performed with the celerity wished for by the noble lord. But in the noble lord's Narrative, in contradiction to the terms of approbation in which, in his dispatches, he had characterised the efforts of the navy; in contradiction to the causes distinctly stated in the Journal as having produced the delay, the noble lord had thought proper to throw imputations on the navy, such as were unfortunately calculated to put the two services at issue. In the short part which he (Mr. W.) had taken in the investigation pending before the House, he had asked no questions by which the two services could be committed. Up to the period of the delivery of lord Chatham's Narrative, the possibility

of their being so committed was unknown. If they should now be committed, (which he prayed God to forbid), to lord Chatham alone would that disagreement be attributable. As in private life, many inferior traits must necessarily be passed over, when the great and leading features of a character were estimable, so in an enterprise, such as the Expedition to Walcheren, minor circumstances in the proceedings of the officers, resulting sometimes from inevitable causes, and sometimes even from the clashing of contending zeal for the service, if the general conduct were exemplary, ought to be buried in oblivion, and never be suffered to interfere with or prevent the expression of decided approbation and unqualified praise. But when a commander in chief of an Expedition bestowed unqualified approbation on the officers connected with him in that Expedition, he betrayed the trust reposed in him by doing so with the consciousness, that that approbation would be succeeded by imputations, which it was impossible that any officer could bear unmoved. What then, had happened after the return of lord Chatham to England? Did the House recollect, that in the Answer which his Majesty had been advised to make to the Address of the city of London on the failure of the Expedition to the Scheldt, the noble lord being present in London, and doubtless in habits of daily intercourse with the other members of his Majesty's government, his Majesty was advised to declare that he did not think fit to institute any inquiry into the conduct of the officers commanding the naval or military service in that Expedition? If lord Chatham's Narrative had been presented before this period or if his Majesty's ministers had been acquainted with its contents, he defied any man to say that his Majesty ought not to have been advised to institute an inquiry into the naval service of that Expedition.

Now, as the noble lord had not denied that the Narrative, which had been produced in the House, was not the only paper of a similar description which he had presented to his Majesty, he (Mr. W.) had a right to assume that before the construction of that Narrative, some other report had been made by lord Chatham to the King, on the subject. He did not mean to say, that his Majesty's ministers could give a satisfactory answer to these observations. They might be as ignorant as he was on the subject. Aware as he was

of the state of the relations which subsisted between the various member of his Majesty's government, it appeared to him very probable that lord Chatham might have declined answering the same question, put by his colleagues, as that which he had declined answering when put by the House of Commons. How, then, was the House to proceed? Taking it for granted that the noble lord had presented to his Majesty some narrative or report prior to that on the table (and if this were denied by any hon. friend of the noble lord, he would sit down and say not another word on the subject,) taking this for granted nothing could be more evident, than that, in justice to the character of the navy, and in maintenance of the principles of the Constitution—principles which ought to be practised as much as they had been preached—the House should determine to address his Majesty for the production of that prior document. How could it be said that the papers on the table were sufficient and satisfactory, when there was reason to suppose that there were still lurking in the closet of the King, papers of great importance upon the subject of the Inquiry, and which had not been submitted to the House? There was every reason to suppose those papers, which were kept back, contained charges and imputations against the gallant officer who commanded the naval branch of the service. When a military commander took such an advantage of his situation as a minister, and of the personal access he had to his Majesty, he must say, that this was a system of favouritism which the House must hold in perfect abhorrence.—It was a sort of favouritism which the constitution of this country knew nothing of, and which was not reconcileable to the idea of a limited monarchy. If such a system of favouritism was allowed to be practised, it would confound all the distinctions between those monarchies that are called limited, and those which are acknowledged to be absolute. The most determined democrats never brought a stronger charge against any monarchy, than that favourites had ready access to the ear of their sovereign, and secret opportunities to poison his royal mind against brave and deserving men, who had no means of defending themselves against such attacks in as much as minions had always a ready access to the sovereign when they had not. In what a situation would the gallant admiral, who was at the

head of the naval department of the Expedition, and the navy itself, have stood, if the existing Inquiry had never been instituted by the House of Commons. The papers laid on the table of the House would have manifested an apparent satisfaction at their conduct, while there would have lurked behind in the king's closet, in a form that could not be gainsaid, a direct accusation by the commander in chief of the expedition against sir Richard Strachan and all his officers. It was impossible that the House could allow any feelings so insiduously created, to exist in his Majesty's bosom, without asking him to communicate them to his people. If any other document than the Narrative already presented, existed, and that such a document did exist, he had a right to presume, since its existence was not denied, he had also a right to presume that such a document contained charges, the Narrative already produced containing imputations which only stopped short of charges. This Narrative, completely at variance with the noble lord's own letters and with the Journal of the expedition, had, according to his own declaration, been prepared by him so long back as the 15th October. It had been reserved, however, till a good opportunity offered for presenting it to his Majesty. On the 14th February it was presented, and on the 16th the gallant general moved for the production of that Narrative, a document which the noble lord had not even communicated to his colleagues for their revision. Refusing, as the noble lord had done, to answer the questions proposed to him yesterday evening, the House of Commons were called upon, on every principle of duty to their sovereign, and of justice to their country, to adopt the precedent of the gallant general, and to address his Majesty for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain any further document, if any such existed. In what office the right hon. gent. opposite must look for those documents, he knew not; but as they agreed to the recent motion of the gallant general, he left it to them to pursue the same course by which they became possessed of the Narrative already produced, as for every overt act of the king, ministers were responsible. His Majesty could do no wrong; and the right hon. gent. opposite must either account for the advice upon which his Majesty was induced to act, or they ought to withdraw from the situations which they occupied in his

Majesty's Councils. He concluded by moving. "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to order that there be laid before the House copies of all reports, memoranda, narratives or papers submitted at any time to his Majesty by the earl of Chatham, relative to the late Expedition."

Mr. Secretary Ryder begged it might be distinctly understood that he did not question the right of the House to present an address similar to that proposed by the hon. gent. Admitting this right in its fullest extent, he contended, however, that in the exercise of the right they must be guided by the limits of discretion. One of the last sentences of the hon. gent's speech would serve as an answer to all that preceded it. The hon. gent. had said, that it was for his Majesty's ministers to consider to what office they would refer in search of the papers which he wished to be produced. Upon this head, he felt no difficulty in stating that there neither was nor had been in any office under government—(Hear! hear! from the opposition side)—He wished to be understood—there neither was nor had been in any office under government any paper, report, memorandum, or narrative upon the subject in question communicated to a single individual of his Majesty's confidential servants, other than that now on the table of the House, and that had not been communicated to them before the 14th of February, the day on which it had been presented by lord Chatham to his Majesty. All the addresses on any subject similar to the present, which the House of Commons had hitherto been induced to carry up to the throne, were either for the production of regularly official papers, to elucidate any measure the expediency of which they questioned, or to ascertain the advisers of his Majesty on any such particular measure. He did not deny the right of the Commons to apply to the crown in any other case, in which they might think fit so to do: but he was persuaded that the motion of the hon. gent. was wholly without example. For even supposing that such a paper as that described by the hon. gent. did actually exist, as it had never been communicated to his Majesty's ministers, he could not understand what possible reply they could advise his Majesty to make to an address from the House of Commons under such circumstances. It

would be in fact to open the private escutcheon of his Majesty. Repeating his admission, that the House had a perfect right to address his Majesty on any subject upon which they might think fit to address him, he was compelled to add that he could find no just grounds upon which the hon. gent. founded the proposition that he had submitted to the House.

Mr. *Ponsonby* declared, that, if the right hon. gent. had not informed the House that he rose to oppose the motion of his hon. friend, and if he had listened to the right hon. gent.'s speech divested of that information, he should have supposed that it was his intention warmly to support it, for there was not a single argument in the whole of the right hon. gent.'s speech, which did not tend to the establishment of his hon. friend's proposition. The right hon. gent. had told the House, that he did not dispute the right of the House of Commons to address the King upon the subject, but to that confession he subjoined the declaration, that if the House were now to exercise that right, he did not know how his Majesty's ministers could comply with the terms of the motion unless by searching the King's private escutcheon. Was this language—was this doctrine for a Secretary of State to his Majesty to hold to a British House of Commons? Did the right hon. gent. a cabinet minister, not know where to find a paper delivered by the commander in chief of an expedition to his Majesty without searching the King's private escutcheon? Did the right hon. gent. think that such a paper was of the nature of a private and confidential communication? If that were the case, every other general who happened to be a favourite, may at any time go up to the King, and privately put into his hand statements tending to prejudice and poison his royal mind against the most brave and meritorious officers, who by this secret proceeding might have their characters most foully calumniated without the least notice or suspicion, and therefore without a possibility of defending themselves. How galling must it be to the feelings of any distinguished officer, to suppose that charges and imputations against him might be poured in secret into the ear of his Sovereign, and the royal mind be thus prejudiced against him? It would be subversive of every principle of justice, or of the constitution, that such papers, placed in the hands of the Sovereign by a minister, should be

conceived private and confidential papers, which the House could not call for. The right hon. Secretary had been most bountiful in allowing that the House had a right to present such an Address as that proposed, if they thought proper; but he said, that in the exercise of this right the House must be governed by its discretion. Now, he would wish to ask that right hon. Secretary whether, according to his ideas of discretion, he thought it was discreet to allow every commander in chief the power of putting what reports he pleased into the hands of his Majesty, without leaving the House of Commons the power of exercising their right (which the right hon. Secretary allowed they possessed) of praying his Majesty to grant them copies of such Reports? Of all the mischiefs which could flow from the access which lord Chatham's situation as a peer and privy counsellor would give him to his Majesty, the greatest evil would be, that of his being allowed to pour into the royal ear whatever charges he thought proper, against meritorious officers; whilst the House of Commons, when solemnly engaged in inquiry upon this Expedition, should be told that they must not be informed what those reports or documents contained, which the right hon. Secretary was pleased to describe as private and confidential papers, merely because they had not been sent (as they ought to have been) to his Majesty through the regular office of the government. The first and greatest benefit which arose to the public from the exercise of a right such as that possessed by the House, was, that all secret machinations for poisoning the mind of the Sovereign against his best servants, were by it rendered impossible, because whoever presented to his Majesty any private memorial, such as that alluded to, was responsible to the public for its contents; and because the ministers who suffered such a memorial to be presented, or who, after the presentation of it, attempted to shield the individual by whom it had been presented, were responsible to Parliament and the public for their conduct. If this were not the case, in what would the monarchy of England differ from the most absolute monarchy that ever existed? If this were not the case, a system of favouritism would be introduced into this country as pure, as palpable, and as perfect as ever prevailed in France or in Spain. The right hon. gent. had declared, that he did not know where to



look for such a paper as that which it was the object of his hon. friend's motion to procure. He would ask the right hon. gent. where he looked for the last? Certainly the right hon. gent. would not receive much information on the subject from lord Chatham, for the noble lord had last night informed the Committee, that he had told his colleagues of his intention to present to his Majesty a narrative of the Expedition, only a few minutes before he actually did present it. In fact, it was in the levee room itself that the noble lord had first intimated to his colleagues the step which he was about to take. From the noble lord, therefore, the right hon. gent. judging by experience, unquestionably could not expect much information. The right hon. gent. said that the House had a right to address the King upon this subject, but that he could not understand what answer his Majesty's ministers could advise his Majesty to return to such an Address. Did the right hon. gent. suppose that, if the House of Commons had addressed the King on the subject, his Majesty would hesitate to deliver any papers which he might have in his possession of the nature required to one of his confidential servants for the purpose of submitting them to the House? On this point, the right hon. gent. had advanced a doctrine of the most reprehensible description. He had produced in debate, the name, personal character and honour of his Sovereign, for the purpose of protecting an administration. Would the right hon. gent. say, that his Majesty was disposed to wink at the calumny of a brave officer like sir R. Strachan, or that he would allow lord Chatham, by insidious representations, to deprive an officer of such long and approved service of the well-merited estimation of his King? Such a supposition was as opposite to the character, to the integrity, to the virtue, to the honour of his Majesty, as it was conformable to the dark spirit of low intrigue, which influenced the councils of his present ministers. To cover their own imbecility, to hide their own dissensions, his Majesty's personal character had been dragged by them into that discussion. He hoped the House would mark its reprobation of a practice so unconstitutional, and agree to the Address, which so many important reasons called upon them to adopt.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* avowed himself perfectly ready to expose himself

to his share of all the reprobation which the right hon. gent. had so abundantly cast on his right hon. friend. He contended that the principle laid down by his right hon. friend did not deserve the censures and animadversions which it had received. His right hon. friend had stated that there was no question but that the House of Commons had a right to address his Majesty for the production of such papers whether they were in existence or not. This point his right hon. friend had conceded; but he had added, what was strictly true, that the House must on every question that came before it, whether on motion for an Address or otherwise, exercise its discretion as to the expediency of affording or withholding its consent. This was the statement made by his right hon. friend—a statement which in no way militated against the constitution: and in this statement, for his own part, he most fully acquiesced, knowing, that though it were within the legitimate scope of Parliamentary controul to call for all documents whatever, still, in its enforcement of that power, that House would not demand what was not expedient for the public service to have produced. Neither was it contended by his right hon. friend, that there was any act of the Sovereign for which his confidential advisers were not responsible. No such doctrine originated with him, and therefore it was wholly unnecessary to animadvert upon that principle, or to suppose, as the right hon. gent. did, that such a discretion would trench upon the constitutional privileges of that House.

The argument of the hon. gent. in support of his motion, proceeded on assumptions that were not true in fact. The hon. gent. first supposed that some communication had been made by the commander in chief of the Expedition to the King before he had given in the Narrative on the table of the House: he then supposed, that in this previous communication the noble lord calumniated his brother officers; and on these two assumptions, he stated that his right hon. friend had dragged into the discussion the person, in order to defend the servants of the Sovereign: when all that his right hon. friend had said was, that if the House were to ask his Majesty for papers, the nature of which they could not describe, and even the existence of which they could not ascertain, they might, with just as much propriety, demand the production of any other imaginary documents what-

ever. It was most true, that the House might, if it pleased, call for the production of all papers, private or public; but he begged to remind the House that to agree to the present motion would be a new exercise of that right. Indeed so fully did the hon. mover feel the force of that observation, that the great tendency of his speech was to impress the opinion that, because the House had addressed the King praying him to have produced the Narrative of lord Chatham, therefore it could not refuse to vote for an Address, calling for the production of any other paper, even not official, relative to the same subject.—But he denied that the Narrative was a paper at all of a similar description, as that which the right hon. gent. opposite now supposed to exist. When the hon. general (Loft) who moved for the production of that Narrative, communicated to him on the 15th his intention of making such a motion, he was apprised of the existence of that document; he knew it was an official paper, and in official custody; and therefore it was that he had no objection in assenting to its production. If compared with the paper now supposed to exist and moved for, the two cases would be found to be directly the reverse. The first one which, when called for by the vote of that House, he knew to be in existence in one of the offices of his Majesty's confidential servants; the other paper now sought, had been absolutely denied to have any existence in any of the departments of the state. Under such circumstances, it was impossible that ministers could give any answer to the Address of that House, without a personal application to the Sovereign. He had no objection to the production of any paper which he knew was in existence and officially accessible; but when it was proposed to call for a paper the existence of which unquestionably had not been rendered official by a communication to his Majesty's servants, and which was therefore out of their reach, to such a proposition he could by no means assent. Nothing could be more plain and obvious than this principle of distinction. The hon. gent. had expressed his opinion that if lord Chatham's Narrative had been known to his Majesty's ministers when the answer was given to the Address of the city of London, it would have been impossible for them to have given his Majesty the advice which they gave on that occasion. To this he would reply, that although the

existence of the noble lord's Narrative was certainly unknown to him at the period alluded to, yet that having had an opportunity of deliberately considering the contents of that Narrative; he had no difficulty in stating that it did not contain anything which would have induced him to offer to his Majesty any other advice than that which he had offered on the presentation of the Address from the city of London. It was his decided opinion that there was not any thing in the Narrative of lord Chatham which ought to have required a different answer to that address. Whatever might have been the view which the noble lord took of the subject, in his Narrative he had merely stated his own case, and left to the admiral to account for those circumstances of a naval nature in which, as lord Chatham supposed, the impediments to the Expedition had originated. Whatever might have been lord Chatham's view of the subject, he would distinctly declare, that it appeared to him perfectly clear from the dispatches, both of lord Chatham and sir R. Strachan, that not the slightest blame attached to the gallant admiral, and that the delay which had taken place was not imputable to the navy, but to the hostility of the weather, and the difficulty of their situation. As the inquiry had proceeded, he had been more and more confirmed in this opinion. There was nothing in the case that ever induced him to give his Majesty any advice that sir R. Strachan should be tried by a court martial, or that any other inquiry of that or any other nature should take place. That was the extent of the answer given to the city of London. What other course would the hon. gent. have pursued, in such circumstances? Would he have directed an inquiry to have been instituted? What kind of inquiry? A joint inquiry? Did his reading or his knowledge of history afford any instance of such proceeding? An inquiry against a naval officer under such circumstances? Was such a thing ever heard of? When pregnant facts disproved the supposition of blame, would it have been justifiable to institute a court martial upon a gallant officer, against whom no charge had been preferred, but who had been delayed in the execution of his duty by circumstances which it was impossible for him to controul? The question now for the House to consider was, would it vote for an Address to the crown to produce a paper, merely for the purpose of ascertaining whether such a

paper was in existence or not; a paper, if inexistence, of whose contents and quality those who called for it knew nothing, and of which he must say, that whatever were its contents and quality, it could never be considered as an official document, for the reception of which there needed any advice, it being merely a communication upon certain facts. It was upon such grounds that he felt himself disposed to oppose the motion for an Address.

Mr. *Tierney* replied to the statements of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and expressed his determination to vote for the Address.

Sir *Home Popham* rose for the purpose of submitting a few observations to the House in support of the motion for the Address. He had thought, that, after the course adopted by the House on a former night, with respect to the production of the Narrative of the earl of Chatham, no argument could have been necessary to induce the House to agree to the motion of the hon. member on the floor. It would be for the House, however, to decide in what manner it should dispose of that motion; but this he would assert, that unless the paper, which it was its object to procure, should be granted, the refusal of it would be productive of much wrong to the gallant officer who had commanded the naval part of the Expedition. That the paper moved for did really exist, he was justified in assuming, because no person during the discussion had ventured to deny its existence. If the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer should even then state to the House, that no such paper existed, he would not say another word on the subject. As the existence of the paper, therefore, was not denied, he must assume that such a paper did actually exist; and if such were the case, he hoped, that the members of that House would feel a sympathy in the situation of the gallant admiral, who was suffering, and would continue to suffer, under the charges insinuated against him, unless, by the production of this document, he should have an opportunity of meeting such charges in every shape in which they could be presented. He felt it difficult to account for the resistance made to the present motion upon any principle of fairness, candour or impartiality. The House would recollect, that the Narrative of the noble earl had been voluntarily produced on a former night, fourteen

days after the Inquiry had commenced; and yet a paper, relating to the same subject, and necessary to the effectual prosecution of this inquiry, was not to be obtained by the eloquence of some of the most eminent members of that House. The withholding of the paper in question was much more severe towards the gallant admiral, whose conduct had been so unaccountably brought in question, than the production of it could be prejudicial or inconvenient. He would recal to the recollection of the House the actual state of the case, and then leave them to decide whether or not they should think the production of the paper necessary. Early in last July, an expedition was undertaken, which had unquestionably not succeeded to the extent which the public had reason to expect. Upon this subject the House of Commons had instituted an inquiry; and 14 days after it had been entered upon, a Narrative of the conduct of the commander in chief, and a journal of the proceedings of the army under his command, were laid upon the table. What reasonable objection there could be to laying any other paper, the production of that noble general relative to the same subject, before the House, he could not perceive. But it had been said, that the Narrative contained no insinuation against the gallant admiral, or the naval part of the expedition. He knew, however, that sir R. Strachan did feel that serious insinuations against his conduct were contained in that paper. But what was still more grievous was, that if he should refute and repel every charge contained in the Narrative before the House he could have no security that a second statement would not then be produced, and then a third; and so on, statement upon statement, and edition upon edition.

He begged of gentlemen not to look upon this as a party question; no, it was a question of justice to the navy, and particularly to the character of that gallant admiral, the idol of the navy, whose whole life had been devoted to the service of his country, who had frequently and gloriously distinguished himself in that service; whose merits were well known to that House, as they had been rewarded with the highest distinctions it could bestow, and the most substantial proofs it could give of its marked approbation, in granting to him a parliamentary provision; in addition to which honourable testimonials of his splendid merits, he had

also received from his sovereign the high honour of a red ribband. He could assure the House that that distinguished Officer felt acutely upon this occasion: and he could add, of his own knowledge, that the whole of the navy fully participated in his feelings and sentiments. What hon. member, he would ask, could, after voting against this motion, go down to his constituents and tell them, that on an occasion when the character of a gallant and most meritorious officer had been aspersed, and a paper had been moved for to enable him to meet the charges against him openly, and to refute them to the satisfaction of his country, he had voted against the production of such a paper. For his own part he knew nothing of the pigeon-holes and skulking-places which had been alluded to by an hon. member; he only knew that this was a question of right, and that the invasion of the right of an individual, like the invasion of the country, ought to unite all parties in one common spirit of resistance. He had the honour to be admitted to the confidence of that gallant admiral, and whilst he had a seat in that House, or an opportunity any where of defending his rights or vindicating his character, he should always be proud to prove by his conduct, that he was not unworthy of that confidence, nor prepared to pass over any insinuations against him, which, upon every ground of truth and justice, he could so triumphantly refute.

He had but one or two observations more to add, on a subject more personal to himself. An hon. member had read, from the statement of the earl of Chatham, a passage which represented that the flotilla under sir Home Popham had arrived nine days later than was expected at its destination up the Scheldt. The fact was, that this flotilla had been only 42 hours later. On the 9th of August, it was ordered to proceed; and, on the evening of the 11th, as appeared from the dispatch of that distinguished officer, sir R. Keats, it arrived at its position, and one of the enemy's gun-boats was burnt in the midst of the flotilla. He had sailed up the river, at night, with a foul wind, without any buoys in the river, and depending for the safe passage of his division upon his personal recollection of the state of the channel, having 16 sail of sloops of war and 50 gun-brigs and gun-boats under his command; and the approbation of such an officer as sir R. Keats was the best proof of the manner in which that service

had been performed.—But it appeared as had been stated, from the Narrative, that the earl of Chatham had written to consult sir R. Strachan on the 4th, and that he had not received an answer till the 9th. On that subject, he had only to observe, that it was perfectly true; that on the 5th, sir R. Strachan had received a long letter from the commander in chief, referring to a variety of important subjects. Instead of replying to that communication by letter, sir R. Strachan thought it would be more respectful to the commander in chief to confer with him personally on these several subjects. The answer mentioned in the Narrative was but the official record of the substance of the conversation at that personal conference, communicated in writing within 48 hours after. But there was a passage in that letter, which he felt it necessary to refer to; it was thus—"Sir R. Strachan informed lord Chatham that if he met with any inconvenient delay in the bombardment of the town, his lordship had only to signify it to him, and he should lay himself with six sail of the line along side the walls of Flushing." Was that the offer of an officer deficient in zeal, activity, or enterprize? Was that the language that would have been held by a person who would leave any effort untried to promote the great objects of the Expedition? All the dispatches of the noble earl, rising in terms of praise in proportion as difficulties were surmounted, conveyed the most unqualified approbation of the conduct of the navy. It was reserved for his Narrative, composed on the 14th of October, and since revised, re-read, corrected, altered and amended, to convey a different impression. As soon as the gallant admiral should get an official copy of the Narrative, he should prepare his statement in reply to it. He trusted that what he had stated would be sufficient to induce the House to vote for the address; and he begged that gentlemen would not suffer themselves to be persuaded by fallacious or sophistical arguments, to vote against the production of a paper, necessary to the ends of justice and the effectual prosecution of the inquiry.

General Loft defended the conduct of lord Chatham. The hon. officer, who just sat down, had laid much stress on the Narrative, and asserted that it was calculated to produce disunion between the army and navy. Could lord Chatham have done otherwise than present it, after the

letter of sir R. Strachan, of the 27th August? for having written which, the gallant admiral, in his examination, had expressed his regret. It was to defend himself from that letter that the noble lord had written this Narrative, and he defied any man to say that it contained a single reflection on the British navy. The noble lord had never shewn a wish to sow mistrust and disunion between the army and navy. He would have been happy could he have made the same declaration with respect to the speeches of the gentlemen opposite.

Mr. R. Ward was not surprised at the warmth of the gallant officer: He did not mean to follow him into the topics he had touched upon, but had risen merely to make an observation upon one point. The gallant officer argued, that unless the paper moved for should be granted, sir Richard Strachan would have no opportunity of vindicating his character from the insinuations said to have been made against it. But he could assure the House that the noble peer, at the head of the Admiralty, who had not been acquainted with the circumstance of the Narrative having been presented to the king till the night of Wednesday, had lost no time in communicating the transaction to the gallant admiral; at the same time informing him, that if he should deem it expedient, in like manner, to make a statement of the naval proceedings of the expedition, it would be his duty to become the channel for transmitting it to his Majesty. He could assure the House, that it was not the desire of the Executive Department of the navy to call for such a statement; but if sir R. Strachan should think that his own character, and the feelings of the country, required such a statement, he would, of course, prepare it, when furnished with an official copy of the noble earl's Narrative. He had but one word more to add upon the fallacious foundation of the arguments of the hon. gentlemen opposite, when they assumed that to exist, of the existence of which they had no proof, and called upon those on his side of the House to prove a negative, when they were themselves bound to prove the affirmative. If they could shew the official existence of the paper, he was ready to go along with them.

Sir S. Romilly would feel it necessary to say but a few words upon the subject before the House, and trusted, that what he should say, would procure him the vote

of his hon. friend opposite—(Mr. Ward.) His hon. friend had stated, that if the paper were proved to be in existence, he should vote for the motion. His hon. friend must recollect, that if a witness were asked in a court of justice, whether he wrote a certain paper, and declined to answer, the judge would direct the jury to consider that paper as in existence. But supposing the paper in question were not in existence, that was a still stronger reason for agreeing to the motion. If suspicions existed in the minds of gallant officers; if jealousies were felt, as if the earl of Chatham had availed himself of his access to the king to present to him papers reflecting upon the character of brother officers; if that were the case, he would ask, whether it would not be much better, by agreeing to the motion, to prove in the most satisfactory manner, that no other paper existed referring to the subject, but that which had been laid before the House. But this was a question of a higher nature, as materially involving the privileges of that House. In the course of the important Inquiry then pending, the earl of Chatham had been called to the bar to give evidence. As a peer of the realm, he was not obliged to answer; and consequently, standing upon his privilege as a peer, he had refused to answer, when asked whether he had given in any other paper to his Majesty than the Narrative on the table. To compel an answer from a peer, that House had not the right. If a commoner had refused to answer under such circumstances, he might have been compelled by the exercise of those coercive powers which that House possessed, but which were inapplicable to the case of a peer. Yet, if they could not oblige a peer to answer, they fortunately had the means to obtain all they wanted—the possession of the paper, if it existed. If such a paper had been put into his Majesty's hands, and that House should vote the Address, he had no doubt, that his Majesty would cheerfully order that it should be laid before them. The House would recollect the means it had resorted to in a former Inquiry, to come at evidence, which was only supposed to be material to the objects of the Inquiry. In that instance, one of the messengers had been sent with a witness, to bring not alone such papers as were material, but all papers that might be found in the escutour of an individual, which papers had afterwards been referred

to a Secret Committee to examine and report such as were relevant to the pending investigation, without allowing the owner to see any of them. When the right was so clear, and the object so important, would not the House, he would ask, vote the Address? If there should be no such paper in existence, then all doubts would be satisfactorily cleared up; the characters of the distinguished officers supposed to be aspersed, would stand as high as ever, when it should be obvious that they had not been injuriously affected by any secret insinuations.

Mr. R. Dundas besought the House to consider the ground upon which the question rested. It had been assumed in argument, that a paper existed containing charges against sir R. Strachan. If it had been the wish of the earl of Chatham to insinuate charges against that gallant admiral, he might have done it in a more effectual manner. What lord Chatham had done in presenting his Narrative was purely in his own vindication. The right hon. gent. then proceeded to justify the Answer which his Majesty had been advised to give to the Address of the city of London, and contended, that if all the circumstances which had since transpired had been then known, they ought to have caused no difference in the terms of that Answer.

Sir J. Anstruther observed, that no member had denied the existence of the paper moved for: that no person had been found to say, he did not believe that such a paper was in existence. But it had been said that it was not an official paper. Any paper relative to an Expedition which led to the waste of millions, and the death of thousands, could not, he contended, be considered in any other light than as an official paper. If no such paper existed, why should they leave it in doubt whether the commander in chief had calumniated the character of the navy? Was there any danger in saying that the paper did not exist? Could any man believe that there was not danger in leaving this question doubtful? The House had resolved upon the fullest Inquiry into the policy and conduct of the Expedition to the Scheldt. They had entered upon that Inquiry, and what did they now stop at? Evidence. A matter of evidence was suggested which was necessary to the carrying on of that Inquiry to the fullest extent: and now the question was, whether they would take the right steps to

secure that evidence? If they were serious in the Inquiry they could not possibly refuse to call for that further evidence. Why was the paper in question to be kept back? Because it affected the accused. He could imagine no other reason for withholding it. And then it would go to establish the principle, that only so much evidence should be adduced as suited the wishes of the person accused. If it was meant to be a fair Inquiry; if the House were really in earnest in the prosecution of that Inquiry, how could they hesitate for a moment to call for any evidence that might be reasonably supposed calculated to throw light upon the progress of that Inquiry? In fine, he thought that if the House meant to put the two services upon an equal footing; if they did not wish to smuggle the consistent prosecution of the Inquiry, or any of the accused parties, behind the king's name, they could not well hesitate to accede to the motion of his hon. friend.

The *Attorney General* said, that lord Chatham had evinced, in his examination, no wish to conceal any point connected with the Expedition. He only refused to answer a question which related to his own conduct subsequently, viz. whether he had presented any Narrative to the king, since his command closed? He then argued the two grounds of right and discretion, and also the matter of precedents. The former he conceded; but contended, that the two latter went against granting the motion. He repeated, that the paper did not exist in any public office of the state: and indeed no paper had been specifically called for, or stated to exist, the whole being founded on an assumption and supposition.

Mr. Bathurst had thought on a former night, that the narrative ought not to have been produced, but he had on that occasion bowed to the authority of the chair, and felt, on the ground of that decision, that the present motion should be agreed to. Supposing that the motion then, instead of being for that paper, or such a paper, had been for any papers communicated to his Majesty by lord Chatham relative to the Expedition to the Scheldt, he wished to know if ministers would have opposed any such motion. He did not think they would, and if they would not, he could not conceive a reason why they should not agree to the present motion. As to the objection started that the paper was not an official one, he should only

say, that when they were called on to consider what was an official paper, it had always appeared to him that it was not the place where it was found, but the nature of the paper that made it official. It had been said by the hon. mover, that he assumed that there was in that paper some matter criminatory of others in the conduct of that Expedition. He did not know upon what grounds that hon. gent. had made any such assumption. But it had been said upon the other side, that those who supported the motion were all along begging the question. That he denied. They were justifiable in assuming the existence of any papers called for; they were justifiable in calling for them in order to ascertain whether they did or did not exist. But he would ask, was there a man in that House who doubted the existence of the paper in question? Did any hon. gent. affirm that it did not exist? Did his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for a moment contend, that there was no such paper? He thought that for these reasons the House must accede to the motion.

Mr. *Canning* begged the candid attention of the House while he stated to them frankly the reasons that influenced him to give the vote he intended to give upon the question now before them. Perhaps the shortest, the simplest, and the fairest course would be for him to state, that according to the principles he had imbibed from what he had seen of the theory, or known of the practice of the constitution, he was long of opinion, that the more fortunate mode of proceeding would have been in the first instance to have referred the whole question of the conduct of that Expedition to a court of inquiry; not that the decision of that court was necessarily in any degree to bind the judgment or fetter the subsequent proceedings of that House. Opinions were numerous that blame must rest somewhere, and it was highly important that the country should know to whom it was really imputable. It must, therefore, in the nature of things, have been expected that the conduct of the Expedition would be enquired into. He thought, therefore, it was extremely to be lamented, that his Majesty's ministers had not instituted proper inquiries into both the branches of the service, naval and military, and by that means enabled themselves to come prepared to meet parliament. His Majesty's government would then have placed themselves in a

situation more favourable and fortunate both for the country and themselves. Even if the opinion had been, that blame was no where imputable he should naturally have supposed, that one of the first steps to be taken by his Majesty's ministers would have been to call for narratives of their transactions, both from the earl of Chatham and sir R. Strachan. Indeed, so well satisfied was he that that would be the course pursued, that he actually came prepared, on the first day of the session to ask for the narratives of both the commanders, and was only withheld from taking that course because he was told that government had not required, nor obtained any such statements. He found, from every information he could collect, that no such thing as a narrative existed. And after the speech from the throne he had made up his mind, as he believed most persons did, that no such narrative was in being. The fact however turned out to be otherwise, the narrative did exist, but it did not seem to exist to any efficient or beneficial purpose; it did not seem intended to make part of the documents upon which they were to form their judgment in the inquiry, nor upon which the executive government itself was to form its judgment. A narrative, then, had thus been found to exist, which though written on the 14th of October did not make any part of the documents on which the executive government formed its opinion that no inquiry was necessary. The House was hereby placed in a very embarrassing and almost unprecedented situation. Lord Chatham (when he spoke of that noble lord, he begged the House to believe that it was with every sentiment of respect and affectionate regard, both from what was due to him personally, and from that high regard and esteem which he should ever entertain for the memory of his much-lamented and illustrious friend, Mr. Pitt, who was so nearly related to him) was, it was true, at the time of the Expedition, a cabinet minister, and a privy-counsellor. In this situation lord Chatham was called on to command the Expedition; and as soon as he accepted that command, he became as responsible for his conduct as any other officer in the army, or any man in the ranks. Then, if this was, as he took it to be, undeniable, he could not see upon what principle that noble lord, or any other person entrusted with such a command, had a right to cut out for himself a royal road to the King's audience.

He was, no doubt responsible to the King, but that responsibility ought to have been addressed through the regular and ordinary channel. As one of the cabinet, he was responsible equally with the rest of his colleagues in office, for the wisdom or policy of the Expedition, to the country and to parliament; but, as the commander of the Expedition, he was responsible through his secretary of state to the King. There was nothing in the principles and character of the constitution of this country, which said, that any thing of a mixed nature was the consequence of his being a privy-counsellor, which entitled him to exemption from the usual responsibility attached to a commander in chief of an Expedition. He should therefore have conceived that the Narrative of lord Chatham should have gone through the secretary of state, or the commander in chief of the army. It was not right that the defence of one officer should go to the office, while that of the other went to the King. If the principles which he maintained were true, the Narrative of lord Chatham ought to have been presented, either through the secretary of state, or through the commander in chief of the army. He had heard that some doubt had arisen on this subject, in consequence of lord Chatham's appointment having taken place under the sign manual of the King. It was supposed that some new and extraordinary right must have resulted from such an appointment, and that that of presenting a narrative to the King, in person, was among the number. In this doctrine he could not acquiesce. The instructions of all foreign ministers received the same sanction; but there was a clause in the instructions, that they should conform to the orders and correspond with the secretary of state who appointed them. Lord Chatham's instructions under the sign manual was precisely the same; and it could never be supposed that lord Chatham was to pass by the secretary of state, and communicate only with his Majesty, because he was a privy-counsellor or a cabinet minister.

Every minister, on his return from a foreign court, was entitled to an audience of his Majesty; and the reason for this privilege might originally have been, that in case a secretary of state should have neglected or misrepresented any part of his conduct, he might, in that audience, have an opportunity of repelling any ill-founded charges, and of justifying him-

self to his sovereign. Lord Chatham had a right to the same audience on his return home; and if it could be said that this Narrative had been given in at that audience, it would be entitled to a very different view in regard to its motives. The House would now see what happened.—No narrative was called for on the termination of the Expedition—no narrative was called for in that more important period, when his Majesty's ministers were framing the speech which was to be delivered to both houses of parliament; and which promised the production of all papers relative to the conduct, execution, and termination of the Expedition to Walcheren. When those papers were laid before the House, there was no narrative from lord Chatham, nor till the 14th of February, when, instead of being delivered to the secretary of state, it was placed directly in the hands of the Sovereign, and by his Majesty directed to be placed in the hands of the secretary of state, for the purpose of making it an official paper.—He could not conceive on what ground this motion, consistently with the state in which the House found themselves, should be resisted. He believed, in his conscience, that if the papers did exist, they were in idea greatly exaggerated; but he would fain believe they did not exist at all. If the other paper which had been read, had taken the course of going, through the medium of the secretary of state, into the King's hand, he should most certainly have thought the papers now moved for did not exist. But the Narrative having first got into the King's hand, and then being made official; and the same adviser having perhaps, thought proper not to make these if they did exist, official, shewed to his mind pretty strongly that they were not such as ought to be made official. He did not, however, think that those papers could properly be withheld, on the ground of their not being official.

The *Solicitor General* was satisfied of the propriety of opposing the motion, upon the very same principles which had been stated by his right hon. friend who spoke last, for supporting it. But, he maintained, that there was no analogy whatever between the two cases quoted by his right hon. friend. For, in the one case, the paper was in existence, and referred to the Expedition to the Scheldt; but in the other case, in that to which the present motion alluded, it did not ap-



pear that there was any paper whatever—indeed, it was distinctly alledged that there was no such paper in any of the ministerial offices. Suppose the Narrative of lord Chatham was kept back by ministers; suppose it were a paper which they did not choose to divulge, what would the House think of them? Instead of withholding such an important document they had, on the contrary, without hesitation, sought and found it in the proper office, and like an honest man his right hon. friend had produced it when called for by that House. But what was his right hon. friend to do in pursuance of the motion now before them? Was it demanded that he should rummage the King's *escrutoire* to search for any communications that might be found there with respect to the Expedition to the Scheldt? Was it to be contended that if a private letter upon a public subject were addressed to the Sovereign, that letter was to be laid before that House, if it had any allusion to the matter of this motion? Such arguments were not to be endured, and upon these grounds he should vote against the motion.

Mr. *Whitbread* felt, that although he had good reason to be satisfied with the condition of the debate, it was yet necessary for him to offer something upon the observations which the House had heard in opposition to his motion; but as to the learned gent. who spoke last, with the most sincere, unfeigned respect for that gentleman, he would pass him over very lightly. He begged, however, to correct a mistake of that learned gentleman upon one point. He did not want papers *cujus cunque generis* to be produced, but those *sui generis*, which were applicable to his motion. Now, as to the speech of the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Canning), he confessed that he had heard it with delight, not only because it was the first time that he had ever happened to experience the support of that right hon. gent., but also because the speech itself was marked by all that peculiar character of reasoning, and ability of statement which belonged to that right hon. gentleman. It was, however, free from those sallies of wit and humour, which were wont to excite such pleasure among the gentlemen who occupied the ministerial benches. But the right hon. gent. had no reason to regret the silence with which his speech was heard. He was not so loudly and literally cheered to-night, but sure he was, the right hon.

gent. had never delivered a speech which his old friends so strongly, perhaps, so severely felt.

There were many subtleties and sophisms advanced by gentlemen on the other side, which he did not think it necessary to notice, as they had been already so ably exposed and refuted by the right hon. gent. on the lower bench (Mr. Bathurst), who was fully competent to the task. But something had fallen from the hon. officer on the other side (general Loft), upon which he could not forbear to remark. That hon. officer, the professed advocate, the acknowledged friend of lord Chatham, had stated, that the noble lord's Narrative was presented in consequence of the letter written by sir R. Strachan on the 27th of August last. What then, lord Chatham had so long fostered his anger!—Although the letter of sir R. Strachan contained such statements as demanded inquiry; although it communicated such information as would have prompted any minister's attention immediately to inquire, lord Chatham was as still and silent as the minister; but yet he nursed his wrath, and kept it warm until sir R. Strachan had been examined at the bar of that House, until he had delivered his testimony, he would say, like a candid and gallant man; then, and not till then, came that paper from lord Chatham, which was so heart-breaking to the navy, not because they deserved the reflections it contained, no, but because, after co-operating with all the zeal in their power, they found the colleague with whom they had acted, by whom their services had been applauded in all his public dispatches, had clandestinely put a paper into the King's hand, containing a direct depreciation of their exertions, and an attack upon their character, attempting to poison the royal mind against them. If after the exposure that had since taken place, the navy did not now writhe under this paper, he thought he knew those who did. The detection was calculated to make some men wince. What did the noble lord say upon his examination at the bar as to this paper? Why, "that he delivered it to his Majesty at the levee." Did he see any of the ministers there? yes—spoke to some of his colleagues about the paper, but did not notice lord Mulgrave; could not say that he was there."

Such was the noble lord's account. Well; what followed? Why, at a very late hour of the night, lord Mulgrave

wrote to sir R. Strachan, stating that lord Chatham had presented a Narrative of his proceedings on the Expedition to his Majesty, but of what nature was not described, and calling upon Sir Richard in like manner to present another. And here he could not help repeating an old anecdote to the House. He did not pretend to have any talent for humour—no, not even for that lowest species of humour, a pun. But there was a pun which occurred to his memory, and which, he thought, might be not inappropriately quoted upon this occasion. Perhaps the story was familiar to many, who heard him, of the lawyer at a coffee-room, maintaining very eagerly, that there was no distinction between the words *also* and *likewise*, when a wag denied his assertion, addressing him thus: “Mr. Dunning is a lawyer, sir, and you *also*, but not *likewise*!”—So with regard to the application to sir R. Strachan on the occasion alluded to. Lord Chatham had presented his Narrative, and sir R. Strachan might present a Narrative *also*, but not in like manner. No; Sir R. Strachan's Narrative was to be put into the hands of lord Mulgrave. What, he would ask, could any man say in defence of such conduct? A right hon. gent. (Mr. S. Dundas) had observed, that he thought it unnecessary to re-state the arguments urged on his side of the House. But where could he find arguments to re-state. In fact, if the right hon. gent. was appointed to collect arguments on his side of the House, he would enjoy a perfect sinecure—which, by the by, was a kind of office to which the right hon. gent., his friends, or his countrymen, were not generally supposed to entertain a very strong objection.

But were there no other papers presented to his Majesty by lord Chatham, relative to the Scheldt Expedition, than that before the House? He believed in his conscience there were, and he would call upon any man in the House to lay his hand upon his heart and, say after all that had passed that night, that he did not believe so. If such a man was to be found he could not expect his vote upon this occasion. But those who concurred with him in his belief must feel the necessity of calling for the production of such papers. Ministers had repeatedly said, that if such papers were in existence they were not to be found in any of the ministerial offices. But this was the jet of the charge—they could not say that

there were no such papers: no, they would not venture upon that. In fact, if they had asserted at the outset that there were no such papers, he would have withdrawn his motion. Could they say so even now, and he would proceed no farther. Several of the gentlemen on the ministerial benches endeavoured to maintain that lord Chatham's proceeding was quite a justifiable act? Was it to be inferred from that, that they would feel it justifiable to follow such an example—that any of them would deem it right secretly to memorial his Majesty against the conduct of a colleague? Possibly, if they could open the King's *escrutoire*, such a memorial might be found—perhaps a similar manuscript to that on the table against the whole of the right hon. gentlemen; a complaint from lord Chatham, that so imperfect or unfounded was the information with which his colleagues had furnished him, and so clumsily contrived their arrangements, that he found it impossible to execute the object of the Expedition. What, if the Lord Chancellor were to have a peep into his Majesty's *escrutoire*, might he not have occasion to exclaim in the words of one of the first dramatists of any age or nation, in *The School for Scandal*—but no; his lordship was too pious to swear, although another Chancellor might:—“A memorial from Mr. Perceval against lord Chatham, and another from lord Chatham against the minister, by all that's damnable.”—Really from the conduct these ministers were so ready to vindicate, and from that course which they were so liable to pursue, the worst consequences were to be apprehended, if it were not for the character of the monarch under whom we lived. But if such ministers had been in existence at the close of the 17th century, under the wily sovereign who then sat on the throne, he would have encouraged them to memorial against each other, he would have kept alive dissensions among them—he would have by such management put each of them in his power, and through them he would have ruined the country. The hon. member could well suppose such a king's *escrutoire* like the lion's mouth which once received the secret information which treachery communicated to the government of Venice, and which often toled destruction. In the Narrative under consideration he recognized some striking features of that species of information; for it attempted to blast the fame

and prospects of a body of gallant officers. But the papers still kept back, might be still worse. They must, however, be brought to light. Such a practice as lord Chatham's conduct disclosed must be exposed and reprobated, or responsibility was a mere name, and there would be an end of even the forms of the constitution.—Some gentlemen even among his own friends were pleased to say, that they pitied the minister. He could not, however, feel any pity for such ministers; for to their own conduct was attributable all the difficulty, distress, and odium, which attached to their condition and character. But he pitied that country which had the misfortune to be placed under the government of such men; and if they retained that government long, he had no hesitation in saying, that England must be the victim of their discordance between each other, and their general mismanagement. Was it possible, he would ask, to reflect upon any part of their recent conduct without a disposition to censure—without a feeling of indignation? How was their answer to the City of London to be accounted for? Were they in the habits at all of consulting with each other? Had they any conversation with lord Chatham, with the writer of the Narrative on the table, before they returned that answer. Did they not even meet at cabinet dinners? They might have had their cabinet dinners, but if they went to cabinet suppers, let them go to one after this night's debate, with what appetite they could.

Upon a division the numbers were—

For the motion - - - - - 178

Against it - - - - - 171

Majority against Ministers - - 7

#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Monday, February 26.*

[OFFICES IN REVERSION BILL.] Earl Grosvenor moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill for preventing the granting of places in reversion. Such was his anxiety that no delay should occur in the discussion of this important question, that, although he now laboured under a severe indisposition, he could not bring himself to propose the postponing of the discussion to a future day. He trusted his indisposition would also plead his excuse for not entering at large into the arguments which might so obviously be

urged in its support. It was with pain he observed a disposition in some quarters to thwart, or by some stratagem to get rid of, the question. On its very first introduction into the House, an attempt was made by a noble lord (Arden) to strangle it in its very birth, by holding out that it was an infringement of the prerogative of the crown, and that as such it could not be entertained by the House before the assent of the crown had by some means been signified to it. The noble lord on the woolsack gave his countenance at the time to this opinion; but he afterwards thought proper to retract it, and the opposition to the bill on that ground was withdrawn. So far it has weathered the formidable rock of the prerogative, and he trusted that it might now get safe into the desired port; though he still had his fears that a storm from some other quarter would again arise to frustrate his expectations.—He hoped however that no attempt would be made to defeat the object of the bill by any compromise. Such an attempt would tend much to discredit the character of their lordship's house in the eyes of the country. The country felt an uncommon degree of solicitude respecting the fate of the measure. It expected, and justly expected, while every description of his Majesty's subjects were cheerfully submitting to the pressure of heavy burthens, and of severe privations of every sort, that some proof should be given that the crown and parliament feel for all they suffer, to maintain the arduous struggle in which we were engaged; and above all, it expected that parliament should at last redeem the solemn pledge they had given of seeing some measure like the present carried into effect. He really was at a loss to see what serious objection could be raised to the adoption of it. The present was a time that particularly called upon their lordships for the adoption of such a salutary measure of Reform, and to prove that they were not inclined to slight the sentiments of the people. The noble earl here entered into an enumeration of the various steps that had been taken with respect to the bill, which had been sent up twice to their bar, and which they had as often rejected, and hoped, notwithstanding what had been done hitherto, that it was not intended to substitute for this measure a mere bill for the purpose of suspending for a limited period the exercise of the prerogative in this respect; a bill which, if passed, was equally an attack on the royal

prerogative. The House of Commons had shewn itself so persevering and determined in the prosecution of the measure, that they had resorted to an unusual mode; that of inspecting their lordships' journals to search for precedents for the purpose of discovering means of reconciling their lordships to the adoption of the measure. Then they proceeded to the bill of suspension. It would seem like a sort of political obstinacy to refuse now to enter fully into the merits of the question, or even to pass the bill, against the passing of which he had not yet heard a single solid objection. The other house had so far proceeded in the business, that no compromise could possibly be of any utility. If the bill was a fit bill, if it was advantageous to the interests of the community, let it be passed, if not, let it be opposed openly and directly, and let it be rejected on broad grounds and in a manly manner. The noble earl then briefly and pointedly adverted to the cases mentioned on a former occasion, of the bill for the limitation of the Peerage, and Mr. Burke's bill of Reform, and shewed that whatever was deduced from the circumstances attending these bills, could not bear against the present bill, which his lordship contended was not an attack on the prerogative of the crown, though it did, he admitted to a certain degree, limit its exercise. That limitation, notwithstanding, was one which did not really take away from the just prerogatives of the Sovereign. Still, entertaining as he did, the highest value and veneration for these prerogatives, it must be recollected that parliament also had its privileges and rights. But he could not permit the supposition, that under the reign of a patriot king, such as we had the happiness of acknowledging, parliament should hesitate for a moment in doing that which was advantageous to the king, and advantageous to his Majesty's subjects. With respect to the interests of the crown, which it was said were involved in this question, he found widely different opinions were entertained. In cases, such as occurred in inclosure bills and other matters in which the crown had a proprietary interest, the consent of the crown during the progress of the bill was deemed necessary: but this was purely a constitutional question, and not one which affected the property of the crown. Much had been said respecting the influence of the crown, the increase of which his lordship thought was abundantly apparent, and

in proof of that referred to the celebrated vote of the House of Commons, by which the House declared that the influence of the crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. But let noble lords only look at the vast augmentation of the naval and military forces of the country, and at the immense extent and complication of the revenue, and say whether the patronage and influence of the crown had not been greatly increased. What but that influence could in any way enable such an administration as the present to retain their situations in the existing circumstances of public affairs? He thought the public must feel, that there was something odious in the manner in which the bill had been resisted. Though this was not an occasion to discuss the merits of sinecure offices; yet he would say that rewards should be given only to those who were deserving of them; still however, nothing appeared to him so absurd as the practice of granting places in reversion: places which would devolve upon persons of whose fitness it was absolutely impossible to form a judgment, who might, before the reversion fell into their hands, be incapacitated, in respect to their ability, their integrity, or any other necessary qualification or recommendation whatever. He conjured the House to attend to this measure, by the passing of which they would at least give to the public some idea that they were desirous of redeeming the pledge of economy they had made at the opening of the session; by which they would shew that they were friendly to practical reform, and for which they would be rewarded by the gratitude of the country. His lordship concluded a very able speech, by moving the second reading of the bill.

Viscount *Sidmouth* expressed a friendly disposition towards the provisions of this bill. It met with his approbation, as a subject of considerable importance, both as it regarded the grant of the offices themselves, and as it respected the just and anxious expectation for some measures of economy and economical reform, which had been raised in the public mind. The bill appeared to him expedient in many points of view, for it would remedy great evils arising out of the grant of offices in reversion. There was one consideration in particular which had a just claim to their serious attention, if the power now existed and was exercised in granting these offices, it often created listless anxiety

in the mind of the reversionists.—Many were induced to look forward with expectations, which ever prevented them from using those faculties and exerting those talents, which had they been placed in a different situation in society, might have produced advantage to themselves and to the country. This listless inactivity was followed by consequences of a most injurious nature—it frequently induced them to sell their reversion for an inadequate consideration—it often excited them to give way to pernicious habits, was often succeeded by pecuniary embarrassments, and sometimes terminated their lives in wretchedness and infamy. This injury would be removed by the present bill, and, therefore he conceived it would produce considerable good in its effects; and it was on this ground that he was friendly to the principles of the bill. But an objection had been stated in the early stage of this measure, that it infringed the prerogative of the crown; on this question he entertained considerable doubts in his own mind; and, therefore, he should feel himself indebted to other noble lords for their opinions on the subject. He should think it advisable even that precedents should be examined on this occasion, to ascertain at what period, in passing a bill of this description to which the consent of the crown was necessary, it had been usual for the king to express his consent to its being further proceeded in. It was his opinion, that whatever the objection should be in respect to the prerogative, it was their lordship's province and undoubted right to proceed till his Majesty's consent would be necessary for their further progress. The only difficulty was, at what particular stage it might be fit and decorous to have his Majesty's consent, when the question affected the prerogative of the crown. He believed it had been the usual practice and course of proceeding, when any bill affecting the property of the king had been brought into parliament, that his Majesty's consent might be expressed at any time previous to the third reading. He entertained every due respect for the prerogative of the crown, and it was therefore his wish that this subject should be delayed until this difficulty could be removed, by examining precedents relative to this point. At the same time, he was so far friendly to the principle, and so fully persuaded of the necessity of the measure, he trusted that delay would be

as short as possible. On this account he recommended to his noble friend to agree to the motion he was about to propose, "That the second reading of this bill, for the reasons, and with a view to the objects, he had already mentioned, should be postponed till Thursday."

Lord Grenville suggested, that, from all the knowledge he had gained upon this subject, it did not appear to him that there was any great distinction between prerogative *Jure Corona*, and property *Jure Corona*. He was convinced that the King's consent might be obtained in any stage of their proceedings, before the third reading. He should therefore recommend that they proceed to the second reading of the bill now, and at any period before the third reading, if it should be thought necessary, they might refer the subject to the Committee of Privileges.—If it was to be held that such consent of the crown was necessary before discussing the principle of the bill, it would be giving his Majesty a direct previous negative to a legislative measure.

The Lord Chancellor conceived this subject to be of great importance, as it affected the prerogative; but apprehended, that the king's consent might be given, with respect to property, at any time before the third reading. Yet he was not prepared to say, that the same rule would apply in the case of prerogative. It was a subject of such importance, that he would wish it should receive every due consideration. Noble lords would not, he trusted, mistake the principle of his conduct on this occasion, for he only suggested his ideas so far as to appoint a form. He would not disguise his sentiments upon the merits of the bill, which would meet with his opposition now, as it had done upon a former occasion; but even if he had been favourable to the general prohibition of places in reversion, yet there were prohibitions of such a nature in the bill, that he should have thought it necessary to make many alterations, and do away its inconsistency, when it came before a committee.

Lord Redesdale considered it very questionable how they should act with propriety, wherever the prerogative of the crown was concerned, and therefore recommended that the second reading should be postponed.

The Earl of Derby said, it appeared to him acknowledged on all sides, that the

prerogative was so far concerned as to require the king's consent in some stage of their proceedings; but it also appeared there was no ground to suppose it ought to be obtained before a second reading. The noble and learned lord on the woolsack had suggested, that many alterations might be made in the bill when in a Committee, and therefore it followed, that this was not the most proper time for obtaining the king's consent; for although he might give it in the present state of the bill, such might be those alterations in the Committee as might change his Majesty's mind with respect to the propriety of the measure.

Viscount *Sidmouth* observed, after what he had heard from noble lords on this question, his doubts had been removed in regard to the most decorous time of having his Majesty's consent; he should therefore beg leave to withdraw his motion.

Upon the motion for the second reading,

The Earl of *Rosslyn* said, he could not sit silent on a question which so essentially affected the prerogative of the crown. The noble earl who had introduced this bill had not thought proper to state one fit reason for its being carried into effect, nor one benefit arising out of its consequences. The greatest tenderness ought at all times to be extended to the power of the throne, and it was the duty of that House to guard with as much solicitude the prerogative of their sovereign, as they were anxious to maintain their own dignity and privileges. The noble earl had generally recommended the measure, as both wise and expedient; and yet could not inform the House of any good which was likely to result from its adoption. How should any peer of that House feel, and what would be their lordship's determination, if a bill was brought in to deprive any one of the peers of a particular privilege? From the knowledge and experience of many years observation of the constitution of the country, he was ready to declare himself the avowed enemy of all innovation. He questioned the truth of that assertion which had been made, that the power of the crown had been increasing for several years. He believed the reverse was the fact; that the power was not so great now as at the commencement of this reign; and it would be found considerably less, when compared with any antecedent period. If the influence of the throne was great in the present day,

it was to be attributed to the steady conduct, the wisdom, and virtues of the present monarch. The public mind, on this subject ought not to intimidate their lordships' deliberation; and, instead of being an argument favourable to their adoption of this measure, it ought rather to be considered as an argument for their rejecting it. Man is a short-sighted creature, more particularly when he acted upon his own presumption; for even the wisest of men could not foresee the consequences arising from a great legislative proceeding. If this were granted to the clamour out of doors, what would be their next demand? they would proceed step by step; they would assail the out-works, one by one; and, at last, they would attack the citadel.

The Earl of *Hardwicke* could not subscribe to the sentiments of his noble friend, much as he valued, and he could not value too highly, his great knowledge and experience. He could not agree that there was any clamour in the country, or that the present measure was any attempt under the influence of clamour to produce a dangerous innovation. Under the pressure of its burthens, the country very naturally looked for every alleviation which it was in the power of the parliament or the crown to give them. Parliament was pledged in the most solemn manner to bring about this very measure, and if ever there was a time when parliament should be studious to maintain its character in the eye of the country, the present was particularly that moment. He denied that the present measure would have the smallest tendency to lessen the influence, or encroach on the prerogative of the crown. It would have the very opposite effect, while it would so far secure the advantage of the country, by securing proper persons to fill those places which would be still at the disposal of the crown.

Lord *Boringdon* was one of those who supported a bill of this nature when it was first brought forward, and was so impressed with the necessity of it, that he differed on that occasion in opinion from those with whom he was then in the habit of acting. With the propriety and necessity of a measure of that sort, he was every day more and more impressed; and a similar impression must be felt by their lordships, if they but looked to the history and origin of the measure, and to the pledge which parliament had so solemnly

given to carry it into execution. His lordship then briefly adverted to the origin of the measure in the recommendation of the Finance Committee, from which, constituted as it now was, so much might be expected, and to the manner in which the bill had been carried in the other House of parliament. All these circumstances could not but have raised a considerable degree of anxiety in the country, and a confidence in the people that parliament would now realize their expectations and its own promises. How sorely must they be disappointed, if, after so much fairness of promise, nothing should be effected towards the adoption of that system of œconomy and retrenchment upon which alone the safety of the country must ultimately depend? The noble lord contended that the adoption of the measure would by no means trench on the prerogative or the influence of the crown. On the contrary, the crown would still have the same power, while those upon whom sinecure places might be bestowed, would be rescued from a most abject state to which in other cases they would inevitably be liable.

Lord Redesdale looked upon the question respecting the influence of the crown, as greatly overstated and as much misunderstood. If any of their lordships should but consider attentively the history of the country, he would find that the objections urged against the influence of the crown were at all times the result of clamour and not of principle. Combinations of great, wealthy, and powerful individuals might be formed for the purpose of rendering the power of the crown dependant upon themselves; and adopting the clamour against influence make that their ladder to office; yet when possessed of their object, they usually forget the clamour against influence. The noble lord contended that the influence of the crown had derived no increase from the augmentation of the army and navy: and argued that the taxes imposed to meet the exigencies of the state, produced such a degree of dissatisfaction, in the public at large with the government, as fully counterbalanced the supposed increase of patronage and influence. He himself had not the good fortune to have any reversions; but what harm did these reversions do to their holders or to the public? There were but one or two instances in our history in which the influence of the crown had proved dangerous. In the reign of Charles I. it was ma-

nifest that in parliament the influence of the crown became as dust in the palace; in fact, it was a mere nothing. If the influence of the crown were reduced in a time of war, upon the plea of the influence that war gave to the crown, and the patronage and taxation consequent upon it, how would the case stand hereafter in time of peace, after the crown had been stripped of its prerogatives? Those who received favours from an administration, generally were among the opposers of the succeeding ministers, and consequently all that was said about influence resolved itself into declamation. He did not consider the measure proposed as an important one, but it was important to oppose it, because it seemed to be a first step to many other dangerous innovations that were denominated reforms. It was no redemption of any pledge given by parliament. It was nothing, the question was simply as to the propriety of taking away the prerogative of the crown in granting reversionary places. Most of those places were merely ministerial. Many years ago the practice had prevailed without any discovery of a grievance. Many wise men had sat in that House before their lordships, who made many useful reforms of abuses, and yet they did not find out this practice to be an abuse. That his lordship considered to be a strong argument on the present question. He had not heard of any great inconvenience that had arisen from the practice, to render such a bill at all necessary. As to the argument about the possibility of the reversionist not being capable of discharging his duties, that would equally apply to the granting a place for one life, as then the holder might live so long, or become so infirm as to be unable to fulfil all the duties of his situation. The passing of the bill would, in his lordship's opinion, be an unnecessary departure from the course and experience of ages, without any view of public benefit. As to the suspension, that question stood on different grounds, as it might take place with a prospective view to some general measure.

The Earl of Darnley strenuously supported the bill. He was surprised to hear any noble lord speak of the danger of a change. Were things always to remain the same with us, however great the changes that might arise around us, in the same situation? Was the constitution a thing unsusceptible of improvement, and could it never be improved without the

risk of danger? If no change had ever been allowed, would the glorious Revolution ever have taken place which secured our liberties that otherwise would have been lost? If no change had ever been allowed, should we now have the present family on the throne? If no change had ever been made in the constitution, where would be all the boasted wisdom and fortitude of our ancestors, to the fame of which they are only entitled by having brought about these salutary changes? That some change must be made in the present system of things, was almost universally felt and acknowledged; our means must be economised, our resources husbanded, or we should never be able to surmount the difficulties with which we had to struggle. The people had been taught to look for the adoption of such a system. Parliament has in the present instance most solemnly promised it: and if they fail of making good that promise, if they betray an unwillingness to correct abuses, and to retrench useless expenditure, will they not themselves sanction the opinion which daily spreads too much among the people, that public men are all equally corrupt; that on the professions of our public men no reliance can any longer be safely placed. It were therefore the interest as well as the duty of Parliament, to realize the expectations they had raised—at least he trusted their lordships would feel the necessity of vindicating their own characters, and asserting their own independence by marking the present bill with their decided approbation.

The *Lord Chancellor* denied that Parliament had fallen into disrepute, but if ever it should fall into disrepute, he would venture to say, that it would be from acting with a view to popularity, rather than upon the dictates of its own deliberate judgment. His lordship then gave a short statement of the manner in which these bills had been brought before the House. A resolution had first been passed by the other branch of the Legislature, adopting the principle of the abolition of the practice of granting offices in reversion. This undoubtedly, as a resolution of the other House, was entitled to a great deal of attentive and deliberate consideration from their lordships. When they came up to their lordships with a bill, conformable to that Resolution, and their lordships not choosing to assent to a measure of this importance, without taking

time for due inquiry, thought proper to reject that bill. A bill next came up for suspending the granting of offices in reversion; and as this, with a view to further inquiry, was not objectionable, it was passed. In the present session, a bill came up for rendering perpetual the Suspending Bill, and he felt it a duty personally incumbent upon him to stop the bill on the point of form. Sir Matthew Hale, who would ever continue to be considered as an ornament, if not an oracle, to the profession to which he had belonged, had, he knew, highly disapproved of reversions, as had lord Coke. But still, their authority was not to be decisive of the question. He acknowledged that he wished to be cautious how he meddled with a system, which had been the practice of the constitution for three centuries. Still he did not go the length of saying, that no good could be done by a judicious regulation—by curtailing the profits of some offices liable to be granted in reversion—and, perhaps, by abolishing others. But such regulation could only take place upon a due and deliberate inquiry; and it would not become their lordships to legislate upon the subject without the opportunity of making such inquiry and having the whole matter before them. But he believed it impossible that the result of any inquiry ought to induce them to go the length of this bill. Whatever might be said about his being averse to innovation, he could not consent to legislate in the dark. The argument as to the fitness or unfitness of persons for the performance of the duties of such places, would operate against offices in possession; and he maintained that the mischief of giving an office in possession improperly, was a much greater mischief than giving one in reversion, because there were many chances against its ever coming into possession. His lordship said, that whatever might be thought, he was not averse to reform in every thing, though he was always averse to a reform which he did not understand. He did not exactly see the length to which this measure might be carried. He must have the whole subject before him, and could not agree to advance step by step till he found that he had acceded to an innovation, to 9-10ths of which he would have been averse, if he had had the whole subject before him at first. He himself had procured three or four reversions for his family, without the smallest conception that he was doing any



thing wrong. He wished that the public should know this; but, however, the whole of these offices were not of sufficient value to make the reversionists very uneasy. Former chancellors had done the same thing, without thinking that they had done any thing improper. His lordship concluded by observing, that it was impossible for him to assent to a bill of this sweeping nature. Any measure of general regulation, he would, however, examine with the utmost care and impartiality, and give it his support, as far as he could consistently with his public duty and his conscience. He did not think it necessary to say any thing upon the question, as to the influence of the Crown.

Earl Grosvenor observed, that he did not think that the antiquity of any abuse was a reason for supporting it. If the practice of granting reversions had continued for 300 years, it ought to be recollected, that it had in the course of that time been severely censured by many eminent men. His lordship then adverted to a pamphlet which had lately appeared on the subject of economy, and the influence of the crown, and remarked, that the perusal had an effect upon him exactly the reverse of what was intended to be produced. Considering the ample means of information possessed by its author (Mr. Rose), he was only surprised that it proved so little. He objected to reversions as having a tendency to generate sinecures, and the augmentation of sinecures produced new reversions in an endless circle. This measure was a real and proper reform, which he most cordially approved. As to the question of parliamentary reform, he certainly could not by any means go the length that some speculative men did, although he and others might think that there were some defects in the representation, which ought to be corrected. But the misfortune of withholding from the public the real and proper reforms to which they were entitled, was to drive them into these dangerous speculations. The vessel of the state, which had weathered the continental storm, was already among the rocks and shoals, and could not be got off without other pilots. His lordship then called upon the bishops for their support, and asked them, whether they did not esteem the act of Elizabeth, which prevented the anticipation of their revenues as the great prop of their establishment. Upon the same principle which led them

to approve of that act, they ought to support this bill.

The House then divided upon the question that the bill be read a second time—Contents, Present 33, Proxies 34, 67; Not-Contents, Present 49, Proxies 57, 106; Majority against the Bill, 39.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday, February 26.*

[PETITION FROM LONDON AGAINST LORD WELLINGTON'S ANNUITY BILL]. The sheriffs of London at the bar presented to the House,—A Petition of the lord Mayor Aldermen and Commons of the City of London, in common council assembled, setting forth, “That they have observed with grief and concern that a Bill has been ordered to be brought into the House for granting a pension of 2,000*l.* per annum for the term of three lives to the right hon. lord Viscount Wellington; and they beg to represent to the House, that a measure so extraordinary in the present situation of the country, under all the afflicting circumstances attending our armies in Spain and Portugal, under the command of that officer, cannot but prove highly injurious in its consequences, and no less grievous than irritating to the nation at large; and that in making these representations to the House, the Petitioners are urged not more from motives of economy and vigilance in the present period of difficulty and distress, than from an anxious desire, that when such marks of national gratitude are bestowed on any of the gallant defenders of their country, they shall be given in concurrence with the general sentiments of the nation, and in strict conformity to the claims of the individual; and that entertaining these sentiments, it is their painful duty to state to the House, that admitting to the utmost extent the valour of lord Wellington, the petitioners do not recognize in his military conduct any claims to this national remuneration; and that in the short period of his services in Europe not amounting to two years, they have seen his gallant efforts in Portugal lead only to the disgraceful and scandalous convention of Cintra, signed by his own hand, a transaction the sound of which must be ever hateful to British ears, and which has fixed an indelible stain on the character and honour of the country; and that in Spain the petitioners have seen the valour he displayed in repulsing the

French at Talavera, with immense loss of lives, produce no other consequence than his almost immediate and rapid retreat, under the mortifying and disastrous circumstance of being compelled to leave his sick and wounded to the care of his enemy; and that as yet the petitioners have witnessed no enquiry into either of those campaigns; and they conceive it to be due to the nation before its resources shall be thus applied, that the most rigid enquiry should be made why the valour of its armies had been thus so uselessly and unprofitably displayed; and that in addition to the reasons the petitioners have stated against this lavish grant of the public money to lord Wellington, they beg leave to remind the House that this officer was employed in India for several years in a variety of services, by far the most profitable that can fall to the lot of a British officer; and that himself and family possessed for a long period of time in that quarter of the world the most ample means of securing to themselves the most abundant fortunes; and that since their return to Europe this family has been in constant possession of the most lucrative offices and emoluments of the state; and the petitioners have seen lord Wellington himself enjoy the singular advantage of holding one of the greatest civil offices of the government, whilst he was in the exercise of his military command in Portugal; and they beg to state to the House that the lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery of London did agree to petition the King for a rigid, impartial and general enquiry into plans upon which the expeditions to Spain and Portugal were undertaken, as well as of that to Holland, and into the conduct of the commanders to whom they were entrusted; and that in direct violation of their established rights, the lord Mayor and Sheriffs, when they attended to deliver the said petition, were not only prevented from delivering the same to the King at the levee, but also denied a personal audience of his Majesty; that they beg to impress it on the House that such right was never before questioned or denied, and they were thereby prevented from laying their just complaints and grievances before their sovereign; and they conceive it to be a high aggravation of the misconduct of his Majesty's unprincipled and incapable advisers, that they have not only placed a barrier between the King and the people, but in the very face of these complaints, and in contempt

and defiance of public opinion, advised his Majesty to recommend to parliament the said grant to lord Wellington: and that when the petitioners take all these circumstances into their consideration, when they reflect too that the unanimous and grateful feelings of this country have never been appealed to for any similar remuneration to the family of the ever to be lamented sir John Moore, who after a long career of military glory, in the constant performance of his military duties, and receiving only his ordinary pay, after having shed his blood in almost every battle in which he was engaged; at length, to the irreparable loss of his afflicted country, he sacrificed his life in its defence; considering all these circumstances, the petitioners submit to the House, that there can be neither reason nor justice in making the proposed grant to lord Wellington; and therefore praying, that the Bill for effecting that purpose may not be permitted to pass into a law."—Ordered to lie upon the table.

[*KING'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS RESPECTING LORD CHATHAM'S NARRATIVE.*] The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* reported to the House, That his Majesty had been waited upon with their Address of Friday last, to which he had been graciously pleased to direct the following answer to be given:—

"The earl of Chatham having requested his Majesty to permit him to present his report to his Majesty, and having also requested that his Majesty would not communicate it for the present, his Majesty received it on the 15th of January last, and kept it till the 10th of this month, when, in consequence of a wish having been expressed by the earl of Chatham, on the 7th of this month, to make some alterations in it, his Majesty returned it to the earl of Chatham. The report, as altered, was again tendered to his Majesty by the earl of Chatham on the 14th of this month, when his Majesty directed it to be delivered to his secretary of state, and his Majesty has not kept any copy or minute of this report, as delivered, at either of these times, nor has he had, at any time, any other report, memorandum, narrative, or paper, submitted to him by the earl of Chatham, relating to the late expedition to the Scheldt."

Mr. *Whitbread* observed, that in the question he was about to put to the right hon. gent., he wished to be understood as

being animated with the most sincere veneration for the crown, and not less so for the wearer of it. His question was this, Who was the privy counsellor, a member of this House, who took his Majesty's pleasure upon the Address?—No answer being immediately returned, Mr. Whitbread continued—"Am I to understand that the right hon. gent. will not, as a member of this House, give an answer to the question I have put?"

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* replied, that although it was the ordinary courtesy in that House to answer questions put from one side to the other, yet, from the menacing manner in which the hon. gent. put the question, he felt it his duty to decline answering it, until called upon by the vote of that House.

Mr. *Whitbread*.—Really if there has been in the manner in which I addressed the right hon. gent. any thing as he has conceived menacing, it was, I assure him, far from my intention, and I sincerely beg his pardon. If, however, the right hon. gent. is determined to persevere in his silence to my question, it will be most certainly my duty to bring it forward in a more formal manner. But wishing, as I do, to divest him of the idea, that I intended to convey my question in an uncourteous manner to him, I take leave to put it again.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*.—I was the privy-counsellor that took his Majesty's pleasure upon the Address.

Mr. *Ponsonby*, without wishing to give any opinion at present upon the answer now given, trusted, that it would be inserted upon the Journals, in order that, if necessary, application might be made to it on a future occasion.

The *Speaker* stated, that it was the uniform rule to have the answer inserted on the Journals.

[*MILITARY EXPENDITURE OF THE COUNTRY.*] Sir *T. Turton* stated his desire before he brought forward the motion of which he had given notice, to set himself right with the House and the country, in answer to charges brought against him by ministers upon a former night. He was then told that his object was to disband the army and stop its pay. The injustice of such a charge was evident from the fact, that the delay his motion would occasion in voting the Army Estimates, could not be productive of any such effect, inasmuch as the Mutiny bill in England would not expire before the 25th of March, nor in

Ireland until the 1st of April.—Independent of that, the House had already voted the sum of five millions for the army. Surely, then, the House would do him the justice of believing, that his motives were not those imputed to him, and that he was but exercising his duty when he objected to give such an army as was voted last year, after the evidence they had received; namely, that out of 105,000 effective men according to the last year's estimates, ministers could not provide in the month of March last 16,000 for foreign service. But, he was told by ministers, that it would be much more correct to bring at once a specific charge against them, rather than take his present course. His answer was, that he would not vote an army so large to their disposal, whom he accused of being criminally lavish of the blood and treasure of the country—to whose conduct, he attributed the loss of Spain, and the depreciation of the king's government in the estimation of the public. Such men he would not trust with the nation's means to be squandered in such expeditions as that to Walcheren. The hon. baronet concluded with moving, "That there be laid before the House a Return of the amount of the Expenditure of the Military Force of the country from the 24th of Dec. 1808, to the 25th of Dec. 1809."

Mr. *Long* stated, that if it was in the contemplation of the hon. mover to have an account of the expenditure of our whole military force, both at home and abroad, that was impracticable without considerable delay. There could be no objection to produce an account of the sums issued by the Secretary at War for the time, although from the late period at which the hon. baronet brought forward his motion, he could not see how it was possible that such return could answer his object.

Sir *J. Newport* suggested, that it would be advisable for the future so to provide that the Mutiny bill should not expire until a more advanced period of the session.

Mr. *Huskisson* said it would be impossible to prepare within a given time the general account required by the present motion, the only practicable object would be to obtain the sums issued.

Mr. *Parnell* considered it no answer to a member of parliament, wishing to inquire into the public expenditure, to be told that the account could not be made up. It was only a proof that our system of ac-

counts was defective and ought to be corrected.

Mr. *Calcraft* contended that the House should pause before it voted a new army to ministers, who, as was proved in evidence, could not out of 105,000 effective voted last year, provide, in the month of March last, 16,000 for the public service.

Lord *Palmerston* answered, that the explanation on that point was, that although there were 105,000 effective men, there could not at that time be provided a disposable force of more than 16,000 men.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* stated, that the full force was effective, but that the obstacle at the time alluded to arose from the state of the new equipments.

The House divided, when the numbers were—For the motion 35, Against it 76, Majority 41.

[LORD WELLINGTON'S ANNUITY BILL.]

Mr. *Whitbread* on the order of the day for the second reading of this Bill being moved, said, that understanding that a petition from the City of London had been that day presented to the House, against the bill, he trusted, that the right hon. gent. would see the propriety of not pressing the second reading on that day.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* confessed, that he could not possibly see the necessity of any such forbearance. He should therefore move that the Bill be now read a second time.—On this question being put from the Chair,

Mr. *Whitbread* said, that he was very sorry to trespass upon the time of the House. He had already occupied too large a portion of their attention, and, perhaps, wearied out their indulgence in delivering at length, upon a former occasion, his opinions upon the merits of the late campaign in the peninsula. He should not now re-state those opinions, but content himself with referring the House to the consideration of the petition that had that day been presented to them from the city of London. The objections to the grant in question were put in so plain, clear, full, and satisfactory a manner as could not fail of making a serious impression upon the mind of every unprejudiced man. He thought, too, that even those who thought more highly of the services of lord Wellington than he did, might have very different notions as to the lavish expenditure of the public money; they were not merely to consider whether lord Wellington deserved that remuneration, but whether it ought to be derived to him from the

public purse. A near relative of the noble lord had, on a former night, favoured them with a statement of the private means of that noble lord which, though not of splendid munificence, was yet, he thought, such as proved that there was no necessity to press further, in the present instance, upon the public burthens.

Sir *J. Newport* said, that when the merits of the case were last agitated, the fate of a much regretted friend of his (Mr. Eden) was involved in uncertainty. That uncertainty had since resolved itself into a melancholy certainty, and he thought that in consequence of that circumstance, it would have been well to have rewarded the services of lord Wellington with the sinecure thus left vacant, (the Tellership of the Exchequer.) That, however, instead of being given to one who had fought for his country abroad, had been bestowed on a person who had distinguished himself by fighting the battles of ministers at home. He thought the Petition from the City of London intitled to great attention. Though he did justice to the prowess of lord Wellington, yet he was of opinion that while no such acknowledgment had been made of the services of gen. Moore, it did not become ministers to propose such a grant to the noble lord who had fought the battle of Talavera.

Mr. *Hutchinson* spoke in favour of the splendid talents of lord Wellington, whom he thought, highly deserving this annuity.

Mr. *H. Martin* said, the right hon. bart. had not received an answer to one point, viz. that ministers had, since the bill was brought in, an opportunity afforded them of giving lord Wellington the office of teller of the Exchequer. Why was the House called on to add to the sums the people were bound to pay, such an annuity as this, when he might have been so well rewarded without adding to their burdens, if ministers had not thought fit to give this valuable office to a right hon. gent. whose services no one had ever heard of?

Sir *W. Curtis* said, he was always sorry to differ in opinion with the city of London, but he must exercise his own judgment, and he thought the gallant general so highly deserving of this annuity, that he could not but vote in favour of the second reading of the bill.—A division then took place.—For the second reading 106, Against it 36. Majority 70.

[ARMY ESTIMATES.] The House having resolved itself into a Committee of

Supply, to which the Army Estimates were referred;

Lord Palmerston rose for the purpose of submitting to the Committee, pursuant to his notice, the various estimates, which it would be necessary to vote for the service of the army for the present year. He was fully sensible how inadequate he was to perform this duty with the same ability which distinguished his predecessors, and felt it necessary to claim, at the outset, that indulgence, which the House was always ready to extend to persons circumstanced as he was. He could assure the Committee, that in soliciting this indulgence it was not his intention to abuse it, and that, though he feared he should be obliged to occupy more of their time than he could wish, he would yet not trespass unnecessarily upon the attention which he trusted would be indulgently extended to him. In explaining the estimates, therefore, which he should propose to be voted, and the nature and extent as well as the grounds of any variations from the estimates of former years, he was determined to do it as briefly as the complicated but unavoidable details into which the question must lead him would permit. The first point to which he had to call the attention of the Committee was, that the estimates under consideration had been framed in strict conformity with those economical principles which had been recommended from the throne, and which he trusted would at all times govern the conduct of his Majesty's present government. On a minute comparison with the estimates of the last year, gentlemen would find that there would be no increase in the expences of the present further than what the exigencies of the service required; nor indeed had any reduction been omitted which was compatible with the defence of the country. The estimates were divided under twenty-one heads, which he would shortly state to the Committee, one by one, in order to point out the differences between them and the corresponding items of last year, and also notice where further savings might in future be expected.

The first head was that of the land forces, respecting which there had been made two or three arrangements, which caused some difference in the statements. In looking to this part of the subject, his Majesty's ministers had paid the utmost attention to proportion the establishment to the effective strength of regiments.

When a regiment for instance was under 400, the establishment was fixed at 406; when over 400 and under 600 at 600; and so in progression, when a regiment contained effectives between 600 and 800, between 800 and 1,000, or between 1,000 and 1,200, the establishment was fixed at the higher number respectively. When the great and often rapid increase of men, from recruiting, and other causes, was taken into consideration, gentlemen must be convinced, that, in this arrangement the line was drawn as closely as was convenient for the service. Another alteration had been made, in consequence of the suggestion of the Commissioners of Military Inquiry, and forage for horses, and bread and meat for the men, instead of being included under the usual head, were now transferred to the commissariat. These items were consequently not included in the estimates; and under this regulation a considerable saving would take place. A third alteration was, the reduction of agency for cavalry, which was lowered 1-4th, making the emolument to the agent still adequate to his trouble, and nearer that received by agents for infantry.—The last alteration he had to notice, under this head of saving, was one of considerable magnitude; it was, the dismounting of 20 men in every troop of horse. Of these, 10 had been dismounted last year, after the estimates had passed, and 10 more were now added to that number to be dismounted. Every regiment of cavalry consisted of 10 troops of 80 men, making 800 men. When ordered on foreign service, six troops were generally sent, leaving two at home for the purpose of recruiting. But it was not necessary for these to have horses, and, therefore, by the present arrangement, the regiments would be fully as efficient for foreign service, while 100,000*l.* per ann. would be saved of the public money.

Having stated the principal arrangements in point of positive saving, he would now proceed to state to the Committee the increase and decrease in the land forces, and the consequent increase or diminution of expence. Under the head of household troops there would be found a decrease in the number of men of 700, and consequently a decrease in the charge of maintenance of 41,249*l.* In the dragoon guards a decrease of 486 men had taken place, and of 26,230*l.* in the charge. Another point of saving in the expenditure, was the discontinuance of quarter

masters in the several troops, and the appointment of troop sergeants to fill their stations, by which a saving of between 7 and 8,000*l.* would accrue, and the troops in consequence be better disciplined. With respect to the introduction of second battalions in regiments of the line, the increase of expence would be about 70,000*l.* The next head would relate to the unnumbered corps, in which a reduction had taken place of 1,237 men, thereby decreasing the charge 49,721*l.* There had also been a reduction in the garrison battalions of two battalions, at a saving of 39,817*l.*

The next head in the estimates was the royal waggon train. In this, too, a very considerable reduction had taken place: as out of the 12 troops, of which it was originally formed, five had been discontinued, leaving only the five troops serving with the army of lord Wellington, and two at home to recruit. This was done, because it was found that this species of force, though very useful on foreign service, if kept up to so great an extent would cost more than, upon a general view of their value, and consistent with principles of economy, could be thought a fair price for their services—(Hear!)—By this reduction a saving was effected of 23,433*l.* The next head was that of barrack artificers, which had been embodied to complete the works and fortifications about Gibraltar. Originally it had been thought proper to employ certain corps of this description there, to do the necessary repairs, and to allow these men to receive pay, and of course be subject to military discipline. That purpose being effected, they would be found no longer in the estimates, or a provision for them making a part of the annual expenditure. The following head was that of the Manx fencibles, in which there was a reduction of 347 men. In these two items the decrease of expence was 18,337*l.* namely, 13,864*l.* for the one, and 4,473*l.* for the other.

The noble lord then proceeded to state the increase in the charge of the establishment which under the next three heads would, in point of charge, be 27,757*l.* in which would be included a sum of about 20,000*l.* for additional field officers. Although this charge appeared on the face of the estimates for the first time, it was not a new one, but had been originally defrayed by Parliament, and included in the aggregate vote. In the

miscellaneous services of the army, which would next come under attention, a large increase of expence (113,921*l.*) would be apparent; this arose principally from a very large sum being required to make up the losses of officers incurred in Spain on service, and in other quarters, particularly in South America. It was proposed also, for the comfort of officers, to introduce for the first time into the estimates, an allowance to the regiments at home, similar to the advantage enjoyed in the navy, in having their wine duty free. This was proposed in consideration of the high duties which attach, and it was deemed but fair to extend the benefit to military officers as well as naval. The sum required he supposed might be about 10 or 12,000*l.* but that would be the subject of future consideration. The noble lord stated, that though the increase under this head of land forces was 127 men, there would be a decrease of 99,477*l.* in the charge.

The next head to which it was necessary to call the attention of the Committee, was the establishments of the regiments in the East Indies, which, for the first time, would be taken under the cognizance of parliament. Although the expenses of that establishment were defrayed by the East India company, the expenses of the recruiting were charged to the country, and under this head there was an increase of 349 for a recruiting company for two additional battalions sent to India. The next head was the embodied militia, in which there had been an increase of 201 men, and a diminution of expence of 150,786*l.* This large decrease in the charge arose from making a larger reduction of the non-effective men, and from transferring the forage and bread allowances, as he had already stated, to the commissariat department. In the staff and garrison establishments, an increase of expence would arise of 21,247*l.* on account of the medical staff principally, and from the scale of allowances proposed to be made in future for the chaplains of the army. The outline of the arrangements, with respect to the chaplains, he trusted would be approved. It had been judged proper to make these reverend gentlemen a floating and disposable body, and to provide, that for the future any person to be appointed chaplain in the army, should bring proper testimonials of his character and abilities, and be approved of by the archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the bishop of London; that when

they had been eight years in the service, they should be entitled to half pay, at the rate of 5s. per diem; that an addition of 6d. per diem should be made for each year of service above eight years, until they had arrived at 10s. there to stop. This, he trusted, would make these respectable persons more comfortable. The next head of material alteration was the public departments, in which an increase of 21,837*l.* had taken place in the charges, on account of the vast increase of business in the war office, and the other offices connected with or dependent on it. There had been, however, a slight decrease in the office of the commander in chief, in consequence of the military secretary, col. Torrens, not holding the same appointments and situation which his predecessor, colonel Gordon, did. In the pay office, an increase of 11,269*l.* had arisen on account of the payment of exchequer fees. In the war office the increase was 8,865*l.* Gentlemen would bear it in their recollections, that the sixth report of the commissioners of military inquiry had stated, that the war office could not get through their business, on account of the vast increase of it from the protracted state of the war. An arrangement was made accordingly (which arrangement had been maturely considered by the predecessor in office of the noble lord), tending to accelerate the passing of accounts, and this was to be effected by dividing the business of examining accounts from the other public business. A new office was built, and three intelligent men, well acquainted with the war office business, were selected to superintend the new establishment, which consisted of an augmented number of clerks, being twenty-four. There was reason to hope that the greatest benefit could be derived, in respect of the quick dispatch of the army business, from this new establishment. The office of examiner of army accounts had been abolished, and a saving of 450*l.* procured for the public. Mr. Moore, the under secretary, retired on a salary, which, including the 800*l.* he receives from the foreign office, makes his income 1800*l.* per annum. Mr. Merry, in consequence of the recommendation of the commissioners of inquiry, relinquished the situation which he held of purveyor of coals to the garrison of Gibraltar, which produced him 750*l.* a year. In the quarter-master-general's office there was a small increase of 877*l.* for maps, plans, &c. necessary for the service of the army.

The next head of increased expence which the noble lord noticed, was the army medical department. A board of general officers had sat for the purpose of devising some plan for making the medical board more beneficial in future, and it was suggested that the department should be under the controul of a director-general, and three principal inspectors. These gentlemen were required to give up their private practice, and as a remuneration for the sacrifice an increase of salary was to be given; it had also been recommended to discontinue the office of inspector of hospitals at home, as being quite unnecessary. The next head was that of the half-pay and military allowances. On the half-pay there was an addition of 340*l.* On the head of Chelsea hospital, a decrease of 5,337*l.* On that of out-pensioners, a decreased charge of 81,592*l.* But there would have been an increase of 18,000*l.* had it not been for the appropriation of 100,000*l.* unclaimed prize-money to this head of service. Under the head of widows' pensions, the increased expence was 6,611*l.* There would appear in the volunteer corps, a decrease of 131,250*l.* arising from the discontinuance of many of the corps and the transfer of others to the local militia. In the local militia there were 25 additional corps, but the reduction of expence was 576,153*l.* and hereafter it would be still more. It was however but fair to say, that this was in part owing to the sum of 417,000*l.* not being voted this year for clothing. The rest was from the number of days of training for the privates being reduced from 28 to 22. Under the head of foreign corps, there was an addition of 975 men, and of expence 35,770*l.* from the taking into British pay the corps of the duke of Brunswick. Under the next head, the royal military college, the increase of expence was 40,972*l.* of which 40,000*l.* was for the erection of a new college at Marlow. The expence of the royal military asylum was also increased 2,547*l.* from the addition of 156 children. The head of charge for retired chaplains and clergymen was diminished 7,131*l.* and in hospital expences 97*l.* was saved. On the compassionate list the increase was 1,400*l.*; on the barracks, in Ireland, 3,042*l.*, and the commissariat in the same country a decrease of 26,000*l.* From all these it appeared that the total increase was 123,758*l.* The deductions were 81,850*l.* and the gross saving 738,992*l.* Between the two years the

balance in favour of the present was an increase of 1,427 men, and a decrease of 952,092*l.* of expenditure. The noble secretary concluded these statements, with a very animated eulogy on our military force, which was as efficient in discipline, as in numbers; and this, not only in the regular army, but in the militia, volunteers, and other description of force. We had 600,000 men in arms, besides a navy of 200,000. The masculine energies of the nation were never more conspicuous, and the country never at any period of its history, stood in so proud and glorious a situation as at present. After a conflict for fifteen years, against an enemy whose power had been progressively increasing, we were still able to maintain the war with augmenting force, and a population, by the pressure of external circumstances, consolidated into an impregnable military mass. Our physical strength had risen, as it was called for, and if we did not present the opposition of numerous fortresses to an invader, as the continent did, we presented the more insuperable barrier, of a high-spirited, patriotic, and enthusiastic people. The noble lord concluded by moving his first Resolution.

General *Gascoyne* complimented the noble lord on the eloquence he had displayed; but rose principally to state some points on which he conceived the committee bound to decide. The officers of the army laboured, in his opinion, under some oppressions which he thought should be removed. It would surprise the Committee if he informed them, and he was prepared to prove it, that the officers of the British army were paid less for their services than in the 1695; he did not mean comparatively speaking, but shilling for shilling, sixpence for sixpence. In proof of his assertion, he referred to a manuscript in the Harleian museum, written by sir R. Harley, dated the 17th July 1695. A lieutenant-colonel received then 17*s.* per diem. A lieutenant-colonel now has only 15*s.* 3*d.* net pay, deducting the Income tax. A major had then 15*s.* Now a major has only 14*s.* 6*d.* A captain then 10*s.* His pay is now only 9*s.* The two next degrees of rank were better in point of emolument now, for a lieutenant has 5*s.* 11*d.* whereas he had but 4*s.* 8*d.* in 1695. An Ensign has 4*s.* 8*d.* he then had 3*s.* 8*d.* The office of secretary at war, was held at a salary of 20*s.* per diem. the pay of a major general. It now was not quadrupled merely, but it was ten

times multiplied as to the amount of salary. The office of under secretary was then filled at 7*s.* 6*d.* per diem; the profit of it now was upwards of 7*l.* per diem. During this period, major-generals had received no addition; and the only reason that seemed to present itself, as accounting for this inconsistency was, that they were not represented, as secretaries at war had been, in that House. The hon. general did not wish to see memorials from men in arms, but he thought government should examine into these complaints of the army. The militia officers were paid in 3 or 6 months; the regular officers were well off if they got their pay within 18 months. He did not mean to say that these abuses had not existed for many years, and was disposed to believe that his Majesty's present government wished to remedy them. Another cause of complaint was the charge of 4 per cent. duty *ad valorem* on all articles of clothing, stores, &c. shipped by them on foreign service. The next complaint was the bat and forage allowance, which is the same as in the sixteenth century. Lord Wellington and sir John Moore had represented the grievance, but no relief had been afforded. Another evil was the Income tax, exacted from British officers even though serving in the Portuguese army.—The hon. general having called the attention of the Committee to these complaints, noticed some of the regulations stated by the noble lord, and first with respect to the allowance for wine. He had calculated it, and reckoning 250 battalions, at 5*d.* per company, the amount divided between four officers would be 25*s.* each officer per annum. Was this sum, he would ask, worth receiving? It was not sufficient to buy a private hair-powder, much less to provide wine for an officer for a year. If it was intended to benefit, them 25*l.* or 30*l.* might be of use. The hon. general stated his determination to bring the complaints of the army before the House on some future day.

Lord *G. L. Gower* felt disappointed at the statement he had heard. He had trusted, that the burdens of the public, as connected with the army estimates, would have been alleviated to a far greater degree. He conceived it to be the duty of that House to examine very scrupulously every item in the estimates which had been so ably stated by the noble lord. In his opinion there were many items which would not contribute to the effi-



ciency of the army. He deprecated the mode at present adopted of purchasing for the cavalry young horses of two years old, which cost the country 50*l.* or 40*l.* a-year in training, and when fit for actual service about 100*l.* With respect to the reduction of the waggon corps, the noble lord, though he had stated the discontinuance of five companies, had not given any reasons for the continuance of the other five companies. In point of fact, he had been told that they were not a useful corps, and in foreign service our commanders had been obliged to hire waggons. Another point of difference between him and the noble lord was, the continuance of the Manx Fencibles. He had moved for a return of that corps, but no return was yet made. When he held the office of Secretary at War, he had informed lord Liverpool of the inefficiency of the corps, as in point of fact some of the officers were farmers, some custom house men, some postmasters, &c. and the privates were labourers employed in their several occupations. There was another part of the military establishment which he considered useless, that was the city militia, and the Tower hamlets militia, which were kept up at a heavy expence, and yet the whole extent of their actual service was limited to the villages of Hackney and Edmonton.—The next material point was the staff establishment, in which for the home district, there appeared the names of the duke of Cambridge and lord Heathfield, who received from 4 to 5,000*l.* a year for doing nothing. The home staff of the army he must contend required curtailment. No man was disposed more than himself to acknowledge the talents of a gallant general opposite (Tarleton) but he could not see the necessity of continuing that hon. general upon the staff of a district where his command was only 2,400 men. In Scotland the staff is very expensive, for over 11,000 men, there were not less than 11 staff generals. All these branches of the establishment required to be carefully looked into and adequately corrected.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* could easily conceive the disappointment which any gentleman must experience when his hopes were not realized with respect to the comparative effect. It was easy for those who had not the execution of the plans, and, consequently, not the necessary connection with the offices, to think that their plans might be without difficulty

carried into effect. With respect to one of the objections, as to the purchase of cavalry horses at two years old, it must be evident to the Committee that if these horses were to be purchased at four, five, or six years old, when fit for service, a sum must be given greater than what they originally cost, and perhaps when wanted they could not be obtained. It therefore was a mistaken notion of economy to suppose that the public would be benefitted by the purchase of horses at a more advanced age. As to doing away the waggon train altogether, the noble lord in command of the army in Portugal considered them of material service in that country; the Committee would not think therefore that government had done wrong in retaining five companies in that kingdom, and two at home to recruit. With respect to the Manx Fencibles, it was only at the express desire of the commander in chief that the whole had not been disbanded, for he had stated that if they were, regular troops must be found to do their duty. It was the duty of government to pay attention to his representation. It would be found, that lord Liverpool had directed the return to be made; but upon inquiry it was discovered that the Manx fencibles were not under the management of the Secretary of State, and consequently he had no information to give the noble lord. At the same time he regretted that the information had not been sought out in some other quarter. As to the staff of the army, in two or three instances the increase of staff to rank, had increased the pay. If the hon. general opposite (Tarleton) had been improperly left on the staff, he assured the noble lord that he had no disposition to let him remain on account of any assistance he could or would give him in the House. He had no expectation of reaping benefit from his services in this quarter. With respect to the complaint of the hon. general (Gascoyne) of the arrears of military pay, he had to assure the hon. general, that arrangements were forming which would obviate that difficulty, and he thought he had before sufficiently explained on the subject of bat and forage money. On the complaint of the pay of the British officers being subject, when out of the country to the income tax, as the law at present stood, there was some doubt on it, but he should think it necessary to recommend to parliament to make some provision for reme-

dying that complaint. As to the wine allowances, that would attach only to those places where the wine duty was payable, consequently would not interfere with foreign nations. But, as to the general principle upon which these estimates had been framed, he could assure the Committee that every care had been taken to retrench all unnecessary expenditure, and that there was every disposition on the part of the government to confine themselves within the strictest rules of economy.

General *Tarleton* defended himself from the imputation, which he conceived had been cast upon him by a noble lord relative to the district over which he held a command. Since he had entered upon that command he had made a considerable reduction in the number of officers under him. He had been called from an active and honourable service in Ireland to be placed in that district, a situation of which he had complained at the time to the commander in chief, and which, in fact, was like sending him to Siberia. Adverting to the statements of the noble lord, by whom the present discussion was commenced, he condemned the plan of purchasing horses at the early age at which they were now bought. Before these horses were fit for service, in the vulgar phrase, "they ate their heads off." The Manx fencibles appeared to him an unnecessary expence. In the Isle of Man they were considered only as feather-bed soldiers, and the volunteers were deemed fully adequate to the defence of the island. The waggon train too, in his opinion, might be materially reduced. Let the British army go where they might, they would always get waggons enough. The hon. general concluded his speech by a warm defence of the character of the army.

Mr. *Huskisson* expressed the reluctance which he felt at addressing the House in the presence of so many members, who were much more competent to discuss the subject than himself; a reluctance increased by the necessity under which he felt himself obliged to differ in some points from his right hon. friend. He trusted, however, that notwithstanding this partial difference of opinion, the sincerity of his attachment to his right hon. friend would remain unquestioned. Doing every possible justice to the ability displayed by the noble lord in the statement which he had that evening made, he confessed that in

that statement he was somewhat disappointed, as it did not realize all the expectations which he had entertained. He had no difficulty distinctly to declare, that he considered a diminution in our military expenditure essential if not indispensible to the existence of the country. To prove this he would enter into a consideration of the commercial situation of the country. After a statement of the comparative annual expenditure for several years past, he proceeded to detail the amount of the taxation. In 1782 the annual taxes were ten millions. In 1792 they were fifteen millions. In 1801 they were 30 millions, and in 1809, they were 60 millions. It appeared therefore that the amount of the taxes was six times what it was 27 years ago, four times what it was 10 years ago, and double what it was eight years ago. To taxation, however, as to every thing else, all must allow that there were limits. The present taxes on consumption were, he presumed, carried as far as they could well be carried. The direct taxes would perhaps admit of some increase, although they were nine times as great as they were in 1793. Still, if the present expenditure were continued, our difficulties must multiply, and he conceived, that the greatest danger to which the country could be exposed, was a failure in its finances. The best mode of counteracting this evil, as in the affairs of a private individual, was not to shrink from the contemplation of the danger, but to look it boldly in the face for the purpose of adopting the best means to avert it. In this point of view, it would be well to enquire whether any inconveniences, resulting from a reduction of our military establishment, might not be more than counterbalanced by the financial advantages that would accrue from such a reduction. In support of this opinion, he made a comparison of the various amount of the different army estimates from the year 1801 to the present time. At the present time, the same preparation continued in an aggravated degree, that was made when the enemy was expected on our shores from week to week. In the amount of the staff this was peculiarly to be remarked. In 1801, when the French threatened instant invasion, and when Buonaparté had no other enemy to contend with, the whole expence of the staff was \$5,000*l*. This year, when the necessity for it was certainly not so great, it amounted to 286,000*l*. The whole of our

regular force at that present moment was about 270,000 men. Allowing one third to be ineffectual, there would remain 180,000 regular troops for the defence of the country. With the militia, the local militia, &c. 400,000 men might immediately be called into action. Now, when the usual force of the country was considered, and the various obstacles with which an enemy would have to contend in an attempt at invasion, it appeared to him that a great part of this force might be dispensed with, and the security of the country remain undiminished. There was one point however, to which he wished particularly to call the attention of the executive government. He did not wish to throw out any invidious imputation, but he did not conceive that the different military departments were sufficiently superintended. The efforts of each department were carried beyond the necessity for them. If in building a mansion, the owner, devoid of any plan, left his workmen of every description to follow each his own idea of strength, or beauty, or usefulness, his materials would prove insufficient, and his edifice become disproportioned. In the cavalry, for the sake of illustration, he thought a considerable reduction might be made. The plan of buying horses at two years old was highly inexpedient; for by the time they were fit for service their keeping would cost at least 150*l*. It had been declared by high military authorities that in case of an invasion it would probably take place in a part of the country in which cavalry could not act. The superabundance of the cavalry was confessed by the noble lord in his admission that it was impracticable to procure horses for them all. Those who were not mounted must necessarily be inefficient. He wished that the cavalry should be reduced from their present number (2,000) to the number in which they could be kept in an efficient state.—After some observations on the Manx fencibles, he proceeded to particularize the excess of the staff in Great Britain. In Scotland there were 11 generals to command 11,000 men. Nor was he aware of the necessity for any staff in the Middlesex district, conceiving as he did, that the large staff at head-quarters must be amply sufficient for the government of that district. Adverting to the dissatisfaction expressed by a gallant general at the situation which he held as a commander of a district, he confessed that he

thought his Majesty's government ought to relieve that gallant general from such a provocation. With respect to the waggon train he agreed entirely with that gallant general in his opinion of them. They were an annoyance on foreign service and useless at home.—After stating various other modes in which the military expenditure of the country might be advantageously curtailed, he observed, that some persons might think that the suggestions which he had thrown out were the result of some political feeling, and that others might think, that if he entertained those opinions formerly he ought before to have expressed them in the House. The opinions which he had just stated, he had always entertained; but when in office he had considered it his duty to state them only to his superiors, convinced as he was that the revision and retrenchment which appeared to him so desirable could be beneficially effected by the executive government alone. Buonaparté had, in a late public document, anticipated an existence of thirty years. He (Mr. H.) was anxious that every means should be adopted to enable Great Britain to maintain the contest for that period, if necessary, and thus to preserve and secure her independence at all times against the machinations of our most inveterate and active enemy.

Mr. *Windham* said he was little disposed to concur in all the reasoning of the hon. gent. who spoke last. He agreed however, in many of his suggestions for economising the expenditure in this most important and extensive department of the state. But the great objection he had to some gentlemen's ideas of reform, was, that they were too narrow and confined to give to the country any substantial benefit. Certainly no man more than himself agreed in the necessity there existed of husbanding our resources, in order that the means of the country might suffice for the ends to be gained. This was an opinion he had ever unalterably entertained, and he would be the first to adopt any system of effectual economy, caring little by whom it should be brought forward. But he never would agree that the expenses of an individual family, afforded any parallel for the expenditure of a country. In the former case, the master of a family might curtail the luxurious extravagancies of his mode of living, and confine his expenses at any time within his means, without injuring the vital com-

forts of his family. But it almost invariably happened in the case of a state, that it would be utterly impossible to curtail its expenditure in a period of emergency without endangering its very existence. There were nevertheless several smaller items, adverted to by the hon. gent. The estimates before the committee certainly afforded much room for deduction; and he perfectly concurred in the improvements recommended by the hon. gent. who, by the by, he must say, came a day too late to the fair. The most prominent of these objectionable estimates, he agreed with the hon. gent. was that of the Manx fencibles. The Isle of Man, however barren in other productions, was very fertile in jobs—indeed it seemed to be one whole job. Where, he would ask, was the necessity for such a corps? The Island was already sufficiently protected by our navy, and by its own inaccessible coasts, upon which it might with confidence rely against the attempts of an invading enemy; if, indeed, the French could discover any thing in the island worth the risk or trouble of an invasion. Now, upon the subject of the waggon train he had no objection to the hon. gent.'s observations, because one of the first achievements proposed by himself when he had the honour of holding the situation of the noble lord, was an attack upon the waggon train; and if he did not succeed in destroying it, he certainly flattered himself that he should overcome it in another onset, if the hon. gent. had only given him and his colleagues time to bring up his forces. There was another head of expenditure also to which he was surprised the hon. gent. did not object; he alluded to the local militia. He was ready to admit there were amongst that body as good men, and as meritorious officers, in other senses, as well as in the city sense of the word; but still, seeing as he did no real utility in the establishment itself, he could see no justification for the expence. The staff and cavalry ought, in his opinion, also to be reduced very considerably. With respect to the latter, he was fortified by the authority of the late illustrious generals lord Cornwallis and sir R. Abercrombie, in the opinion that great reduction might be made in the cavalry, without any injury to the service. Upon the more minute points he did not purpose troubling the Committee at present. He agreed with the hon. gent. however, as to the necessity of econo-

misg in every practicable point, and of husbanding our means of maintaining a long and protracted warfare; as no man, he believed in the event even of peace, would undertake to be bound for the good behaviour of Buonaparté, it was fair to infer, that a long war we certainly should have. With respect to the navy, he must make an observation by the way. He believed that, if ever there was a time when that part of the force of the country could bear a temporary reduction, this was that time. It was difficult for him to conceive the occasion of keeping up so large a naval force, at a time when the naval supremacy of the country was greater than at any former period. As to the circumstance of its being what is called "a favourite service," the idea was quite childish. It would be a base dereliction of the duty of ministers, to keep up a system, as a hobby horse, at an extravagant expence to the country, at a time when the money might be so much better expended. He could not but approve of the calculations of the noble lord, but he rather feared that they were made upon supposition. He did not wish to follow him into his various statements; but where he thought there was a most glaring error, he must observe upon it. When the noble lord talked of the whole expence of the local militia amounting to no more than 400,000*l.* he must take the liberty of thinking, that his estimate on this head was not perfectly correct. For his own part, he had no hesitation in asserting that, when the Committee took into their consideration all the expences concomitant upon that establishment, he did not mean the expences upon parishes only, but the continually increasing bounties, which were taken out of the pockets of the people, the total expence would amount nearer to two millions than one. He was aware it had been said, that it was necessary to force men into the militia, in order thereby to induce them to volunteer their services into the line; but he denied they were forced into the militia, or that the measure could have any other effect upon the military establishment of the country, than the had one of an enormous and unnecessary expence. If the Committee were in earnest in its professions of economy, let it begin by wholly doing away the local militia, and establishing the army on a proper foundation. It was impossible to get the army formed upon any rational footing, unless something of this kind was

doze. He was anxious to see such a system, as would prevent the recurrence of such numerous expeditions, as the country had witnessed within the last year or two. He did not mean to condemn all that was done under the head of Expeditions; but he certainly condemned the unwise, imprudent, and fruitless expence of sending troops into Spain. That was decidedly a measure of the sort he felt himself bound to deprecate. On the other hand, if he saw any thing rational, or judged of upon principles of wisdom, he would be the first to support a measure, which was calculated for the security and advancement of the public good. The right hon. gent. concluded by observing, that these were the heads of expenditure upon which he could not refrain from making some remarks, and he expressed a fervent hope, that the force of the country, one day or other, would be more economically raised, and more judiciously applied, than could be expected under the present administration.

Mr. *Rose* stated that he was as desirous as man could be of retrenching the expenditure of the country wherever it could be effected without an injury to the interests of the state, but he believed, that few branches of the public offices could at present admit of any material diminution, when we had so powerful an enemy to contend with. The Manx Fencibles had been reduced since 1805, to one-third of their then number, and if it should be deemed advisable, the cavalry could be also reduced; but with respect to the Newfoundland Fencibles, he did not consider that they ought to suffer any diminution from considerations of economy; indeed, additional grants ought rather to be made for the defence of that settlement, for it was not known but that the enemy, if ever an opportunity occurred, would endeavour to take possession of it. In the time of the American war, France thought it of sufficient importance to send a large regular force there, which plundered the people, and in the space of a few days created a damage of half a million sterling. He readily allowed that many items might be decreased in our expenditure on the home service, but he did not know where to begin. A superintending controul was wanted to point out and abolish the expenses that would admit of it without detriment to the public service, and to check those additional charges which were yearly creeping into existence under whatever

administration the country had for the last twelve years been placed. Much retrenchment might be made, but it ought not to be entrusted to rude hands, who from a narrow habit of thinking, would do more harm than good. Whatever was to be done, ought to be tried and effected gently and gradually.

Mr. Secretary *Ryder* said, that three modes presented themselves of reducing the expense of our home establishment: 1st, reducing the number of our local militia; 2dly, reducing the quantity and quality of their clothing, or 3dly, diminishing the number of days of exercise, and reducing the pay of the non-commissioned officers. The two first modes were deemed inconsistent with the public service, but the last was adopted, by reducing the number of days of exercise from 28 to 22 in each year, and reducing the number of sergeants and corporals, which arrangement not only produced a saving to the country, but did less injury to the agricultural interest than the original plan had done.

Mr. *P Moore* congratulated both the hon. gentleman on the other side, (Mr. *Rose* and Mr. *Huskisson*) on the new sentiments which they had this night expressed—on their zeal for that reform and retrenchment in the public expenditure, which they discountenanced so much in the last session, when proposed to the consideration of the House, by his hon. friend near him, (Mr. *Wardle*.) It was grateful to his mind, as well in respect to the gentlemen themselves, as for the public good, to witness the reform which had taken place in their opinions. The hon. gent. then adverted to some of the points in discussion. He reprobated the system on which the Manx fencibles were supported, and asserted that they were merely kept to serve a nobleman, upon ground which that House had formerly bought of him. He had received a letter from a correspondent in the isle of Man, from which he would inform the House, that the Manx fencibles, instead of being 300 strong, as represented by the noble lord, were actually 800, with a complement of 24 officers. These commissions were held by attorneys, tradesmen, and other individuals, resident on the island; and, what was most extraordinary, the men were never seen in their uniforms except on particular occasions. This was certainly the most singular proof of military service he had ever heard of. The House would see, therefore, that these officers were virtually

sinecure pensioners. He trusted that this information would be sufficient to induce the noble lord to look into the subject with a little more precision, than it appeared he had done from his statement in the discussion of this night.

Earl Temple said, he wished to put two distinct questions to the noble lord opposite, to which he expected satisfactory answers; First, what security would be given to the country, that the new medical board, recently appointed, would take care to guard against the calamities which were so justly attributed to the old medical board? Whether the physicians appointed would be capable of judging of camp and contagious diseases? and, secondly, whether the rumour was true, which was so prevalent namely, that those who composed the late medical board, were suffered to retire on their full pay? Whether those persons, whose ignorance and misconduct had occasioned to the country such material losses of its best troops, were allowed to retire not only with impunity, but loaded with unmerited rewards?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose and said, he could not but deprecate the abruptness of the noble lord's interrogatories to his noble friend, who could hardly be expected at that precise moment to have it in his power to give distinct answers to the noble lord's questions. As far, however, as it was in his own power, he would satisfy the noble lord. With respect to the first question, he really could not conceive how any assurance could be afforded before hand, as to the capacity of the individuals to be appointed to the present medical board. The noble lord might be assured that care would be taken to select the most eligible persons; and it was meant as an additional security for the performance of their duty, that they should give up all private practice and confine themselves wholly to the superintendence of the medical department, and to the consideration of those diseases to which the army was most liable. With respect to the other question, all he had to say, was, that the conduct of his Majesty's government, in this particular, was guided by long-established regulations of the then existing medical board, that their conduct was determined upon before the present inquiry was thought of; and it was thought rather hard to turn persons adrift upon the world, without some reward for past services.

Mr. Wardle observed, that although

there were many points, upon which he did not feel it necessary to dwell at any length in the present discussion, he could not refrain from expressing his just and utter astonishment at finding, after the very extraordinary coldness with which the suggestions he had the honour of making to the House last session on the subject of retrenchment had been received, that the very points, on which he had then touched, had now been taken up by the gentlemen opposite to him. For this he thanked them most kindly, as he was sure the country would also do. And he confidently trusted, that the Committee had now shewn that sort of mind and decided spirit of economy, which would justify the country in the hope and expectation that something in the way of retrenchment would be done—nothing could give him greater pleasure than to see his Majesty's ministers beginning to do that which was absolutely essential to the salvation—to the very existence of the country. He rejoiced extremely in the conviction apparently felt by those who, on a former occasion, had refused to listen to his suggestions; and as his sole object was the good of his country, he should not be fastidious on the score of the instruments by which that object, of which he should never relinquish the pursuit, was obtained. With respect to the Local Militia, he should not at that time make any observation; but on the subject of the waggon train, he feared that the Committee were not aware of the enormous expence attendant on that unprofitable and useless establishment.—He had not yet been able to obtain the papers relating to that branch of service, for which he had moved some time ago, otherwise he should at the moment have been able to prove to the Committee that the estimate now before them, of the probable expenditure of the waggon train, fell greatly short, nay that it proved but a small portion of the real expenditure of that branch of service; but as the intility of this wasteful corps appeared to be admitted by all sides, he trusted that the public would very speedily have to congratulate themselves on its entire abolition. The commands with which foreign generals had been entrusted in this country, and particularly in the county of Essex, he could not but deem highly reprehensible—such was not formerly the usage in this country; and he verily believed, that even but a very few years ago no minister could have been found so dar-

ing, as to have appeared in that House after having sanctioned a measure so repugnant to the feelings of Britons, and so contrary to the general spirit of the constitution. The introduction of foreign troops into this country, on the permanent footing which they seemed to have acquired, was a novel measure, evidently arising out of an unconstitutional principle. The expenditure of the country had now arrived at that point, when it became necessary to examine every channel of expense, however minute; for it would not serve as an answer to say, that this object was trifling—that was inconsiderable—the aggregate of minute waste would, he was certain, be found to swell amount into a prodigious bulk. There was, however, one article of expenditure, to which the imputation of minuteness could not be applied—he meant the army clothing, in the supply of which, it was absolutely necessary that some reform, and that too without delay, should take place. In the last year, government had given an advance of *5s. 6d.* on every suit made by private contract, more than what was paid where the contract was open to public competition!—and he was certain that Mr. Courtnay's supply would be found to have been as good, at least, as that of Mr. Pearce. Why was the public to pay 75,000*l.* more than was necessary, and more than the amount for which the supply could be furnished? That was the fact, and he pledged himself to prove it! If the supply of accoutrements and that of cavalry appointments were brought to open contract, he had not the smallest doubt that a saving would accrue at which the country would be astonished. He was fully prepared on this subject to give ample proof in support of his assertion, and would certainly bring forward the subject, unless his Majesty's ministers would render that unnecessary, by themselves undertaking the investigation and retrenchment of a subject of expenditure so highly important. He had some time ago pressed on the House the subject of the price of great coats, with which the army was supplied—at that time the supply was at the rate of *16s. 6d.* per coat.—Ministers had in that instance listened to his suggestion, and the contract was thrown open. What had been the consequence? coats of fully equal, nay, even superior quality, as he should afterwards shew, had subsequently been delivered to the army at only *9s.* per coat, a reduction of be-

tween 50 and 60 per cent. This was a fact, beyond the power of dispute, and sorry he was that, in stating that reduction, he could not there stop—but there was yet remaining what, although he would not directly term it a job, something so very extraordinary, that he could not pass it over in silence. For those very coats which could now be afforded at the sum of *9s.* there was charged for the process by which they are supposed to be rendered water-proof—how much?—why no less than half a crown, almost one third of the original cost, when it is notorious that the process can be as completely effected for sixpence! He had said that the coats thus supplied at *9s.* were superior to those for which *16s. 6d.* had been formerly paid, in proof of which he need only state, that the coats at *16s. 6d.* had neither linings nor pockets, while those at *9s.* have both, and are four inches longer! It might be thought by some gentlemen that he had dwelt with too much minuteness on this subject—he had been minute—he had, at the same time, been minutely accurate, and his object was to impress on the minds of the Committee the imperious necessity of military retrenchment in general—for he could assure them that when they come to examine other articles of military expenditure, with equal minuteness, they would find the contract for great coats an example, and that not an exaggerated one, of our general military expenditure. The same principle of expenditure obtained throughout the system, and the same system of retrenchment would be found correctly to apply to that important branch of national expenditure. In the estimate of the expenditure in the office of the secretary at war, he observed an excess of 10,872*l.* The noble lord had told them that there had been no change in the war office, but that different persons had been selected to accelerate the completion and passing of the complicated accounts of that office. Now those very persons had been at work for years, and, notwithstanding that, the accounts were yet in the utmost confusion—nothing had been done towards reducing them to order; and yet, in 1808, there were 113 efficient clerks in the war office! Mismanagement there certainly must be somewhere, and he verily believed that not one-fifth of the regimental accounts were got through in any one year. He was extremely sorry to see also from the estimates, that the numbers of the foreign corps in our ser-

vice had increased, this was a principle and a practice which he should ever oppose. No less a sum than 30,000*l.* appeared on the face of the estimates, for recruiting the foreign corps. That such a sum should be required for such a purpose, excited alike his sorrow and his indignation!—but we could not now go into Spain and recruit from Dupont's army. No fewer than 800 of Dupont's army, who had been made prisoners, were taken out of Spanish jails, and incorporated into foreign corps in our service—these were some of the recruits with which our foreign corps were supplied. He had a very strong desire to know whether the duke of Brunswick's corps, that has so recently been taken into our pay, had received any thing like bounty or recruiting money—such was the rumour, which, if true, was truly extraordinary—and he begged leave to put it to the noble lord whether such was the fact. If it were so, he should think it a very sufficient reason for putting an end at once to this species of recruiting. There was another item in the estimate, which to him appeared not less extraordinary; but, perhaps, it was susceptible of explanation—as last year the estimate of the foreign dépôt was 15,000*l.*; in this year it was 20,000*l.*—an excess of 5,000*l.*; while the whole expence of the British dépôt, including the cavalry, was estimated at only 13,000*l.*!—[Here several members became impatient for the question.] Gentlemen might call out question! question! but that would only protract the debate, for he was determined to do his duty. On the head of barracks in Ireland, there was a grant of 135,500*l.* for the erection of new barracks. Would the Committee without document or information grant such a sum? He had on a former occasion stated, that there were already several very excellent barracks in Ireland, unoccupied, and yet 125,500*l.* was asked for building more barracks in that country! and this, too at the very time when the right hon. gent. (Mr. Rose) in his pamphlet, having just discovered that this barrack system is so expensive—acknowledges himself to have been deceived in it! he trusted, however, that the Committee would not consent to throw away the public money in this manner.—There was but one more point on which he should trouble the Committee. The different regiments were all calculated at their full establishments; but on what ground

did they vote away the public money for men who were not in existence, as it was well known that none of the regiments were complete in their establishments? Was it possible that the whole of the money demanded could be wanted? Not one-third of it. The second battalions of many regiments were composed of boys, the pay to whom was nine-pence; and yet these estimates, on which they were called upon to vote away the public money, made no distinction, but classed them all as men at one shilling.—He anxiously trusted that the Committee would pause—that they would make a stand ere they thus lavishly voted away sums in his opinion so greatly exceeding the necessity of the service. It was his intention to have moved, that the estimates be referred to a select Committee—in that he should not, however, persevere; but he would maintain, that were a minute examination of the sums actually required for the service of the year to be instituted, the estimate before the Committee would have been reduced at least two or perhaps three millions. He trusted that after what he had stated, something decisive would be attempted by his Majesty's ministers on the different objects of retrenchment which he had pointed out; but if, unhappily, he should be disappointed in that hope and expectation, he should certainly feel it his duty to bring forward so important a subject by some specific motion.

Sir *James Pulteney* could not help replying to one or two of the observations of the hon. gent. who spoke last. With respect to the delay in making up the regimental accounts, he had the satisfaction of stating to the House, his belief that a plan which he had himself partly suggested before he retired from office, was now carried, or carrying into effect, from which the most satisfactory results had taken place: the account being now in a very forward state of adjustment. Great fault had been found with the estimate for the army exceeding the actual amount of the establishment. That excess had been most ably and most clearly stated by the noble lord who opened the debate; he had only to observe, therefore, that it was a rule which had been adopted for two or three years past, of averaging instead of estimating, the precise amount at its real value; by these means, every contingency was completely answered; and the surplus was appropriated for other



objects specified in the estimate. The statement of the *hon. gent.* with respect to the clothing of the army, excited in him so much surprize, he could not possibly conceive it to be correct.

*Mr. Huskisson* said, he still retained all the sentiments he expressed last session, with regard to the proposition of the *hon. gent.* (*Mr. Wardle*) with which sentiments he had not this night uttered a word in any degree inconsistent.

*Mr. Parnell* considered the continuance of the waggon train in Ireland as a most severe and unnecessary expence. He complained, that in bringing forward the present army estimates no attention appeared to have been paid to the valuable advice contained in the Report of the Commissioners of Military Inquiry. No answer had been given to the question, whether the members of the late medical board received pensions, and whether the duke of Brunswick's corps received bounty or not.

*Lord Mahon* contended that no practical grievance accrued from the employment of foreign troops. It was a theoretic complaint, and calculated to produce as much delusion as another question, upon which much clamour was excited, he meant Parliamentary Reform. Much was said about good old times, and of our ancestors; but when such appeals were made for such purposes, he was almost inclined to wish that we had had no ancestors at all.

*Lord Palmerston* replied shordly to the objections of the preceding speakers. With respect to the abolition of the local militia, he had only to observe, that that was a force established by act of parliament, and it could only be reduced by a legislative proceeding. The expences of it, however, had been considerably exaggerated; he had the satisfaction of stating to the Committee, that great reductions were daily making in its appointments, and he trusted that the objections to the heaviness of its charge upon the country, would be speedily removed by these regulations. There were many of the estimates, which he humbly conceived were objected to upon very fallacious grounds. The most material subject of complaint seemed to be the waggon train; which was objected to upon the score of inutility, and the enormous expence required to maintain it. With respect to the latter objection he could only assure the Committee, that every econo-

mical arrangement had been resorted to, for the purpose of reducing its expence to the lowest possible estimate. As to its utility, he could only refer the Committee to the opinions of those great generals, who had experienced its advantages. He trusted he need only instance the testimony of lord Wellington to remove the prejudices which seemed to prevail on the subject. That noble and gallant general derived such considerable assistance from its services in Spain, that he requested to be reinforced with five additional troops. On the subject of the *Manx Fencibles*, he must say, that if their importance in a military capacity was not very great, yet in a municipal point of view, they were of the highest value, in protecting the coast, and preventing contraband trade. The objection urged in respect to the increase of cavalry he trusted would be obviated by a due consideration of the importance of keeping up a supply of young horses to fill the ranks, when horses of a proper age, as had been proved by experience, could not be procured for any money, for immediate exigencies. With respect to the reduction of the regiments of the line, as far as the establishments would admit, without endangering the safety of the country, every thing had been done to lessen the expence, and dispense with superfluous corps. Whatever might be thought of detaching regiments, no general, he believed, would wish a diminution of the real effective force of the army. There was another point with which great fault had been found, namely, the staff. Now he believed that, considering the strength of the regular forces that were distributed through various parts of the kingdom, no considerable reduction could be made in that department of the army, without injuring the public service. It had been asked by an honourable member, whether the foreign troops under the duke of Brunswick received a bounty; in answer to that question he had to state, that each man did receive a bounty, on enrolment, of 3*l.* 17*s.* which, however, it was to be observed, was expended in necessities. With respect to the circumstances of the boys, being estimated at a shilling a day, he should say, that it was true that a great number of boys, who chiefly composed the second battalions, received only nine-pence per day, the surplus of the estimate being afterwards disposed of as levy money for the purchase of horses. After replying to the other

points, he concluded, by moving the question on the first estimate.

The question was then put and agreed to ; as were all the other Resolutions.

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Tuesday, February 27.*

[TOLERATION OF DISSENTERS.] Viscount *Sidmouth* rose, for the purpose of drawing the attention of their lordships to the returns of licensed preachers and places of worship, lately laid on their table, in consequence of the motion made by him last year. These licences extended from the year 1760 to 1808 ; but, although their nature and amount were such as must deeply impress upon the minds of their lordships the importance of the subject, he wished the return to be made still more complete ; and, since this could be easily done, he should conclude with a motion to that end. Whatever steps it might be necessary to take respecting the object of his motion, he wished it to be distinctly understood, that he was by no means unfriendly to liberty of conscience ; to a wise, liberal, and enlightened toleration. He would be the last to oppose any system of that kind, or to introduce measures subversive of it ; yet so important did he consider the object which he had in view, that, should no one more qualified to accomplish it, take it up soon, he should, during the present session, feel it his duty to bring the question before that House. His lordship concluded by moving for returns of licensed preachers and places of worship in England and Wales, under the Act commonly called the Toleration Act, from the diocese records of each ; and also, throughout the same countries, for returns of licences, granted at the quarter sessions for each county, to dissenting ministers, and for their places of worship. Both motions were to include all licences from 1760 to 1808.—Agreed to.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday, February 27.*

[ROMAN CATHOLIC PETITIONS.] Mr. *Grattan* rose to present to the House a Petition from divers Roman Catholics in Ireland. It was a prayer for constitutional privileges. It applied for those privileges through the constitutional organ ; it sought for a legitimate object by legitimate means ; it was right to encourage communion between the people and their re-

presentatives ; it preserved that mutual understanding that was so necessary to the maintenance of mutual good will. When last he had the honour of addressing the House in behalf of the Catholic claims, he had then stated that the Catholics were willing to concede to his Majesty the right of Veto on the Catholic nomination of their bishops. He was sorry to say, that he could not now affirm, that such were the sentiments of the Roman Catholics of Ireland upon that subject. Whether he had misinformed the House, or the Catholics had been guilty of retraction, was a question which he should never agitate, it being his fixed principle never to defend himself at the expence of his country. The admission of the Catholic to a participation in the rights enjoyed by his Protestant fellow subject, he had always thought a measure of imperious necessity, originating in wisdom, and founded upon the public good. He had, however, at the same time thought, and uniformly thought, that the investiture of a foreign power with the unqualified and arbitrary right of nomination to any portion of our magistracy, was in itself an objection that circumscribed the liberality of many, and had shaken the confidence of more. This objection might perhaps be removed, certainly be modified. He thought it ought to be modified ; for putting it broadly, it was calculated to awaken apprehension of injurious consequences to these realms, and more particularly if looked at in reference to the present situation of the spiritual head of the Roman Catholic religion. The Pope was or was likely to be, a French subject ; it was desirable, it was indispensable that the nomination of the spiritual magistrates of so great a portion of the community should not be placed under the controul of the common enemy. In saying this, he spoke the sentiments, the wishes of the Roman Catholics of Ireland ; their opinion in this respect was notorious and decisive ; they were unanimous as to the object ; they differed only as to the means : and if the majority should ultimately disapprove of the measure of Veto, he thought that it behoved the Catholics to provide by some other mode equally efficient, and not equally obnoxious, that no grounds be left for those gloomy apprehensions of insecurity, resulting from acceding to their claims.—It was, he repeated, absolutely incumbent upon the Catholics to adopt some other mode, since they could not agree to that, to

shew that the admitting them to the privileges of the constitution was wholly consistent with its safety. He had deep and ample faith in that consistency—but now when the Pope was, or was soon to be, the subject of a foreign enemy, the Catholics would be solicitous to provide that the nomination of their spiritual magistracy should not be an instrument against that constitution they had so long contributed their aid to support, and so long solicited the privilege to enjoy. The Catholic might not think the mode of Veto the best way to effect this desirable purpose, but the object was not the less ardently to be wished for because they disputed the best means of attaining it. Upon some future day he would take occasion to call the solemn deliberation of the House, to sit in judgment upon the great question of giving all the defenders of the empire the same dear interests in its security—of consolidating our means as a people, by making us an united people, cementing our strength by a more universal diffusion of the privileges that made us strong, and extending the defence of our rights by extending their participation. On that day he should rest his arguments upon two great claims, which he would put in on the part of the constitution: first, no religious disability; next, no foreign nomination. Upon the common ground of those two principles, he would take his stand: for the present he should say no more. He deprecated in the present stage any conversation that could not embrace the question fully, and that might go too far upon detached points; and upon the future discussion he trusted that there would not be betrayed, upon either the one side or the other, any heat or violence. This was a question upon which transient effusions of ungoverned warmth might inflict permanent wounds. Passion and prejudice should keep equally aloof from its discussion. The soothing progress of time had imperceptibly done much to heal, and change, and reconcile—reciprocal good will had been gaining upon reciprocal recrimination. The question was a sort of protracted marriage. Both parties were growing wearied of asperity—they were learning to bear with one another's failings, to take the worse for the sake of the better, and would soon have a common sympathy in their sufferings and enjoyments. The right hon. gent. then concluded with moving, That the Petition do lie on the table.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that though the right hon. gent. had deprecated any further discussion at present, he could not forbear making one or two observations upon what had fallen from him. However fortunate those humble efforts had proved, which he had made in resisting the claims of the Roman Catholics, it did not appear from what had fallen from the right hon. gent. that his motives in resisting those claims had been at all connected with those principles of bigotted intolerance, which had been so liberally imputed to him; for it was clear that had those claims been granted, they would have been granted upon principles utterly inconsistent with the safety of the constitution. It did appear, that whatever difference of opinion had prevailed, between him and the right hon. gent. upon the abstract question, yet that right hon. gent. was of opinion, that certain great and important provisions were indispensable, in order to guard the constitution against the danger likely to result from that concession. The right hon. gent. had at length admitted the danger of giving the Roman Catholics what they sought for; or, if he did not, why did he speak of the necessity of a remedy? It appeared then, that they both saw the danger, though they did not agree as to the best means of providing against that danger. He hoped, therefore, he should hear no further charges of intolerance, since the right hon. gent. himself, who had been so long the advocate of the Catholic claims, had acknowledged that there was something to be apprehended from the spiritual influence of the Pope in the nomination of the Roman Catholic bishops. This was the intolerance of which he (Mr. Perceval) had been guilty. He had all along thought it dangerous—so did now the right hon. gent. But there was one other point upon which he would beg leave to say one word. The right hon. gent. had said, that he would never discuss the question, whether he had misinformed the House, or the Catholics had retracted the cession of the Veto. This was all very well between the Catholics and the right hon. gent. but not so between that right hon. gent. and the House; for if the House had been so influenced by that proposition as to have suddenly resolved upon some summary and immediate proceeding, that right hon. gent. would have obtained from the House a consent upon a condition, which

condition would never have been fulfilled. He concluded, with entering his protest against the principle of charging intolerance upon the exercise of one's own judgment upon a great religious and political question.

Mr. *Grattan* said in reply, that he had never changed his mind upon the great question of the Catholic Claims; the course he had pursued had been pursued by others. When Mr. Fox presented the Petitions of the Catholics, he did not enter into the consideration of the small items of minor expediency, that was for the committee to do, and that great statesman moved for a committee; so had he done. He supported the broad question, and reserved the minor questions of qualifications, limitations, security, for the committee. He first asked them to go into the committee, and in that committee to make provision for the details. It had been argued on the ground of provision of security in another place. It was allowed to be a question of complicated consideration, this was, then, an argument for going into the committee; besides, the Pope was then an independent power, or at least a power dependent upon England; but now the Pope was wholly dependent upon France, and it was to be remembered, that the actual situation of the Pope was a mere ingredient in the question. By deferring the measure till now, the Catholics had lost the opportunity of obtaining their privileges, and England had lost the opportunity of displaying her generosity under the most favourable circumstances.

Mr. *Hutchinson* said, that he did not wish to delay the House for any time, but as he had never known a minister to display such a want of discretion and candour as the right hon. gent. in what had fallen from him, he thought he would be wanting in his public duty, if he did not make a few observations. He hoped that what had fallen from his right hon. friend (Mr. Grattan), would have its due effect upon the Catholics, whose cause he maintained; and that they would be ready to come forward, and declare themselves willing to separate themselves from foreign influence, and to yield up any pretension, which was inconsistent with the security of the constitution. He would not give his opinion upon the Veto, but thought it rather hard that a question but newly started, should be taken advantage of, and brought against their substantial claims.

He was sure that the Catholics would do right to assent to the Veto, if they could do it consistently with their religion. The right hon. gent. opposite had declared his happiness at this new difficulty, and, he regretted to observe, had hinted at other objections, which, perhaps, nothing could remove from his mind. The right hon. gent. would do well to consider that the class of Catholics, in behalf of whom the Petition was now presented, was not obscure. He would do well to consider their number, their wealth, and their respectability; so far from being enemies to the constitution, they had given the most decided proofs of their attachment to it; every appeal which they made for redress, was made through the Legislature; nor did they seek any thing inconsistent with the security of all existing establishments. They called for the most public discussion of their constitutional claims.

The Petition was as follows :

"The several persons, whose names are thereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and of others, his Majesty's subjects, professing the Roman Catholic Religion in Ireland, beg leave to represent to the House, that the petitioners did, in the years 1805 and 1808, humbly petition the House, praying the total abolition of those penal laws which aggrieve the Catholics of Ireland; and that they now feel themselves obliged, in justice to themselves, their families, and their country, once more to solicit the attention of the House to the subject of their said Petitions; and they state, that the Roman Catholics constitute the most numerous and increasing portion of the inhabitants of Ireland, comprising an immense majority of the manufacturing, trading, and agricultural interests, and amounting to at least four fifths of the Irish population; that they contribute largely to the exigencies of their country, civil and military; that they pay the far greater part of the public and local taxes; that they supply the armies and navies of this empire with upwards of one third part in number of the soldiers and sailors employed in the public service; and that, notwithstanding heavy discouragements, they form the principal constituent part of the strength, wealth and industry of Ireland; and that yet such is the grievous operation of those penal laws of which the petitioners complain, that the Roman Catholics are thereby not only set apart from their fellow sub-

jects as aliens in this their native land, but are ignominiously and rigorously proscribed from almost all situations of public trust, honour, or emolument, including every public function and department, from the Houses of Legislature down to the most petty corporations: and they state that, whenever the labour of public duty is to be exacted and enforced, the Catholic is sought out and selected; where honours or rewards are to be dispensed, he is neglected and contemned; where the military and naval strength of the empire is to be recruited, the Catholics are eagerly solicited, nay compelled, to bear at least their full share in the perils of warfare, and in the lowest ranks; but, when preferment and promotion (the dear and legitimate prize of successful valour) are to be distributed as rewards of merit, no laurels are destined to grace a Catholic brow, or fit the wearer for command; and the petitioners state thus generally the grievous condition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, occasioned solely by the fatal influence and operation of those penal laws, and though they forbear to enter into greater detail, yet they do not the less trust to the influence of reason and justice (which eventually must prevail) for effecting a full and deliberate enquiry into their grievances, and accomplishing their effectual relief; and they do beg leave, however, most solemnly to press upon the attention of the House the imminent public dangers which necessarily result from so inverted an order of things, and so vicious and unnatural a system of legislation; a system which has long been the reproach of this nation, and is unparalleled throughout modern christendom; and they state it as their fixed opinion, that, to restore to the Catholics of Ireland a full equal and unqualified participation of the benefits of the laws and constitution of England, and to withdraw all the privations, restrictions, and vexatious distinctions, which oppress, injure and afflict them in their country, is now become a measure not merely expedient, but absolutely necessary; not only a debt of right due to a complaining people, but perhaps the last remaining resource of this empire, in the preservation of which they take so deep an interest; and therefore praying the House to take into their most serious consideration, the nature, extent, and operation of the aforesaid penal laws, and, by repealing the same altogether, to restore to the Roman Catholics

of Ireland those liberties so long withheld, and their due share in that constitution, which they, in common with their fellow subjects of every other description, contribute, by taxes, arms, and industry, to sustain and defend."

A Petition of the Roman Catholic freeholders and inhabitants of the Queen's County, was presented to the House by Mr. Parnell; containing the same allegations and prayer as the last preceding Petition.

A Petition of the Roman Catholics of the county and city of Cork, whose names are thereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and others, his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland, was likewise presented to the House by Mr. Hutchinson and read; setting forth, "That the Roman Catholics of Ireland, amounting to four millions at least of his Majesty's subjects, constituting a vast majority of the population of that part of the United Kingdom, and contributing largely and liberally to increase the revenues and to recruit the fleets and armies of the empire, have long suffered and do still suffer from the restraint of laws humiliating in their provisions and most injurious in their effects, and that their services to the country have been at all times conspicuous and important; at home they have improved and extended the arts, agriculture and manufactures, abroad they have promoted the success and exalted the glory of the British arms, yet they are ignominiously proscribed from all the higher ranks of trust or honour in the state, shut out from the just rewards of a laudable ambition, and degraded below the condition of the meanest of their fellow subjects; and that under these circumstances the petitioners beg leave most earnestly to solicit the attention of the House to the imminent dangers which must result from a system of legislation so oppressive and impolitic, at a time when one mighty enemy has laid prostrate almost every other nation of Europe, rendered incapable of effectual resistance by the discontents and disunion of their people, and when the safety of our own is threatened by the same powerful and implacable foe; and the petitioners do beg leave to state, that to restore the Roman Catholics of Ireland a full and unqualified participation in the benefits of the constitutions of their country, and to remove all the restrictions and vexatious distinctions which affect them, is now become

a measure absolutely necessary for the preservation of this kingdom from the perils which surround it; and therefore praying the House, to take into its most serious consideration the nature, extent, and operation of the aforesaid penal laws, and by repealing the same altogether, to restore to the Roman Catholics of Ireland those rights so long withheld, and their due share in that constitution which they in common with their fellow subjects of every other description contribute by taxes, by arms, and by industry to sustain and defend."

And the said Petitions were severally ordered to lie upon the table.

[PROCEEDINGS RESPECTING MR. FULLER FOR DISORDERLY CONDUCT.]—The order of the day being read, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to enquire further into the policy and conduct of the late Expedition to the Scheldt: the House resolved itself into the said Committee; and after some time spent therein, Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair; and sir John Anstruther reported from the Committee, that they had examined a witness, and had made a further progress in the matters to them referred; and that he was directed by the Committee to move that they may have leave to sit again. And the House being informed that a member of the Committee had misbehaved himself during the sitting of the Committee, making use of profane oaths, and disturbing their proceedings, John Fuller esq. member for Sussex, the member complained of, was heard to excuse himself; in the doing of which he gave greater offence, by repeating and persisting in his disorderly conduct. Mr. Speaker thereupon called upon the said Mr. Fuller by his name; upon which Mr. Fuller was directed to withdraw;—and he withdrew accordingly.

Ordered, *nem. con.* "That the said John Fuller, esq., for his offensive words and disorderly conduct, be taken into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House; and that Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant accordingly."—And the Serjeant at Arms having informed the House, that he had, pursuant to their order, taken into his custody the said Mr. Fuller;

Resolved, "That this House will, immediately, resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to enquire further into the policy and conduct of the late Expedition to the Scheldt:" The

House accordingly resolved itself into the said Committee; and after some time spent therein; the said Mr. Fuller returning into the House in a very violent and disorderly manner; Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair, and ordered the Serjeant to do his duty; Mr. Fuller was accordingly taken out by the Serjeant, assisted by his messengers.

A member in his place, having informed the House, that Mr. Fuller had requested him to offer his excuse to the House for his misbehaviour; a motion was made, and the question being put, That John Fuller esq. be discharged:—It passed in the Negative.

#### HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Thursday, March 1.*

#### [CORN DISTILLATION PROHIBITION BILL]

The Earl of *Albemarle* presented a petition from the landholders, farmers, and others, frequenting the market of Lynn, in the county of Norfolk, which the noble earl moved should now be read.

The Petition was read by the clerk, and stated the grievances under which they laboured; that they were under the necessity of sending their corn coastwise, for the purpose of its being vended; that they were not able, in consequence of the prohibition of distillation from corn, to dispose of three fourths of their grain, sufficiently to meet the enormous expences attending the cultivation of arable land, and the many taxes to which, in these times, they were liable. The petition concluded with praying their lordships to take their situation into their most serious consideration.

The Earl of *Albemarle* then said, he rose for the purpose of proposing what he conceived would be consistent with the dignity of their lordships. The petitioners were men frequenting the market of Lynn, in the county of Norfolk, which produced an immense quantity of barley; and in consequence of the Prohibition Bill, were labouring under those grievances which the petition stated. They had taken the earliest opportunity of alledging their complaints, in order that they might be heard by counsel at the bar of the House. Their lordships were in the habit of permitting those who petitioned to be heard by counsel, and he trusted the same indulgence would be allowed the present petitioners. For this purpose, he hoped the noble earl would have no objection to

offender at the first sitting of the House. There was no precedent of any case similar to this; but even where members had been committed for improper language, the House had directed that they should be reprimanded. But if this motion was carried, the entry on the Journals would be, that, after the commission of this unprecedented outrage, Mr. Fuller was discharged at the next sitting of the House. The best apology, perhaps, for the conduct of Mr. Fuller, was the conduct of the House itself, which had allowed improper language to pass so often without notice, that its laxity had in some measure formed a snare for Mr. Fuller on this occasion. If the House had been more strict in enforcing its rules, such an outrage as this would, probably, never have taken place.

Mr. Lockhart observed, that it was rather too hard at this moment to allude to the former conduct of Mr. Fuller: if the hon. gent. who spoke last, really did mean to allude to him. The House not having noticed it, it ought not to be brought up against Mr. Fuller in his present situation. He knew how much Mr. Fuller regretted the outrage into which he had been betrayed in an unwary moment, and he knew that his regret was the more keen, on account of the misconception which he found to prevail both in and out of the House, as to his having meant any disrespect to the Speaker. He had done all that was in his power to counteract that impression. He had apologized for his offence, and expressed his regret that he should have been led into it. He hoped, therefore, the House would feel that its dignity would not be in the least compromised by assenting to the motion.

Mr. Whibread said, that he had sat for 20 years in the House and never witnessed such a gross outrage as had been committed the other night. He was present—he saw it all—he heard all—but would not quote the language used. Those who were present will recollect that it was only by an accidental circumstance that the outrage had been prevented from proceeding to the utmost excess of violence. After this Mr. Fuller sent the House a sort of an apology directed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

[The Chancellor of the Exchequer here interrupted Mr. W. and said, that he understood the apology to be directed to the House, though it had been inclosed in a letter to him.]

Mr. Whibread in continuation, insisted that it was directed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer only, and taking up the paper from the table, read “I beg you will inform the House that I am sorry for what I have done, and beg leave to apologize for my conduct.” This was therefore incontestibly directed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer alone. The paper itself shewed that such was the fact, and it was impossible they could deny it. Of the letter inclosing this apology the House knew nothing, as it was not on the table; but after all, the apology was far from being couched in very ample terms. Gentlemen had talked a great deal lately about their privileges. One man for a violation of them had lately been reprimanded at their bar, and another had been sent to Newgate, and was the House to suffer an outrage within its walls—the greatest outrage that had ever been committed, to pass with this slight mark of its sense of such conduct? when an hon. baronet, who was present at the time, thought that he who committed this outrage ought to be sent to the Tower, it would not perhaps be considered as harsh, that he (Mr. W.) expected a much more ample apology; and even supposing an ample apology to be made, he could not have thought it possible that the offending person should be dismissed without a reprimand from the chair. When gentlemen who saw the outrage, doubted, if it would be consistent with the dignity of the House to allow the man who had so insultingly violated its privileges and rules, ever to sit there again, it was proposed to dismiss the matter with this meagre apology and slight duration of confinement. Many gentlemen present had seen the outrage; all of them had heard of it; the whole public rung with it. He affirmed, that not the House alone, but the Speaker had been insulted; he had heard the language used and could not be mistaken as to its obvious import. He would not quote it, unless he was challenged to do so. But if he should be challenged to quote the words, he thought they were such as would leave no doubt of the correctness of his conclusion. He must therefore oppose the motion.

Sir R. Williams thought he might move, as an amendment, “That Mr. Fuller be brought to the bar to apologize to the House, and that if the apology should be deemed sufficient, he might be discharged.”

Sir E. Knatchbull was not present at the time the outrage took place, but he had

heard of it, and he regretted that he was under the necessity of admitting, that this apology was hardly sufficient. Yet it would be allowed, he believed, that he was far from being indifferant as to the character and conduct of the unfortunate member who had incurred the displeasure of the House. He had taken the liberty of calling upon him, and had found that if it was conceived that he had offered any insult to the Speaker he was ready to come to the bar and make the most ample apology, and he trusted he would be allowed to come to the bar for that purpose.

Mr. Secretary *Ryder* did not rise with a view to diminish the sense which the House appeared to entertain of the insult offered to it, nor to extenuate the offence committed. But at the same time, it was but fair to consider the situation in which the hon. member was when the outrage was committed;—it ought to have its weight in his favour;—that the insult was not a premeditated one. What the precise expressions were, he did not know, for he had not heard them; but he believed it to be admitted, that the hon. member was then in a situation in which he could not altogether appreciate the very improper nature of his conduct. With a view to example, however, he would propose an amendment to the motion of his right hon. friend. The hon. gent. opposite (Mr. C. Wynn) would perceive that it would appear on the Journals, not only that the hon. member was discharged at the next sitting, but that the House did not sit the day immediately following the outrage. He concluded by moving as an amendment, “That Mr. Fuller be called to the bar to be reprimanded by the Speaker, and then discharged.”

The *Speaker* thought it right to state to the House, in justice to the individual whose conduct was now under discussion, that he had received a letter from Mr. Fuller, with an apology for expressions which he had not heard; and if he had heard them, the House would give him credit, he trusted, when he said that they would not have operated in the least on his mind, except as connected with the dignity and authority of the House.

Sir *R. Williams* said that he had moved an amendment.

The *Speaker* observed, that he understood the hon. baronet only to have thrown out a suggestion, without embodying it into a formal amendment; but if he had misapprehended the hon. member he hoped

the House would give him leave to correct himself.

Sir *R. Williams* then said that he would second the amendment of the right hon. gent.—The question being put,

Sir *John Anstruther* rose, and, amidst cries of “question, question,” said, that he did not mean to oppose the Amendment. His duty to the House (he was chairman to the Committee of Inquiry) had called upon him to pay particular attention to the outrage; and he was satisfied that it had proceeded in a great measure from a certain species of accidental misfortune. He, however, thought it necessary that a personal apology should be made to the Speaker. He now understood that apology had been made; but he also thought it proper that the apology should be entered on the Journals, if this was regular,

The *Speaker* said, that nothing would appear on the Journals to shew that there was any personal insult to the Speaker, and this superseded the necessity of entering the apology on the Journals:

Mr. *G. Vansittart* asked, whether it would appear on the Journals that any apology at all had been made?

The *Speaker* answered in the affirmative, and mentioned the precedent of a person who had offended by words, some years ago, in whose case it was stated, that the regret he expressed for his conduct was the ground on which the House admitted him to his seat again.

The question was then put, and the amendment carried without a dissenting voice.

The *Speaker* then ordered the Serjeant at Arms to bring Mr. Fuller to the bar.

The Serjeant, with his mace, went accordingly to Mr. Fuller, and brought him to the bar; whereupon the Speaker, sitting in the chair covered, reprimanded the said Mr. Fuller, and he was ordered to be discharged out of custody, paying his fees. The Reprimand was as follows:

“Mr. Fuller; You now stand at that bar, in the presence of the Commons of this United Kingdom, to receive the declaration of their displeasure.

“During the progress of a Committee of this House, employed upon a solemn and important enquiry, your offensive language and disorderly conduct required an appeal to the authority of the whole House. Called upon by the House to excuse your misconduct, you aggravated your first offence, by insulting its dignity. And when committed to a custody which



ought to have been obligatory, alike upon your person and your honour, you forcibly broke from that restraint, and entered these walls with clamour and outrage unparalleled.

"This is the head and front of your offending. For my own part, I may state, with most perfect sincerity, that in no period of this transaction have I experienced any other sentiments than those of deep concern and regret, in common with the whole House, that any honourable member should have placed himself in your situation. And we are now willing to believe, from what was expressed in your behalf at the close of the same evening, when these events occurred, and from what has been represented again to us, during this day, that you feel a due sense of your own misconduct and errors.

"The moderation with which this House has visited your offence demands your most humble and most grateful acknowledgments. But let not this considerate forbearance lead you to mistake its motive, or to neglect its warning. For if, unhappily, you should at any future time relapse into the same or similar practices, there will probably remain but one step more to be taken, for rescuing the authority of this House from inevitable disgrace, and removing the possibility of your continuing so presumptuous a contest.

"For your past misconduct I am enjoined now to reprimand you, and you are hereby reprimanded accordingly; You are moreover discharged out of custody, paying your fees."

Ordered, nem. con. That what has been now said by Mr. Speaker, in reprimanding the said Mr. Fuller, be entered in the Journals of this House.

[PETITION OF THE CATHOLICS OF WATERFORD.] Sir John Newport presented a Petition of the catholics of the county and city of Waterford, setting forth, "That notwithstanding the several Petitions which had, on former occasions, been respectfully laid before the House, praying a repeal of the penal statutes affecting their body, have not hitherto been attended with success, they now conceive, from the extraordinary circumstances which have occurred, that they not only are warranted, but that it is become an imperative duty again to appeal to the tribunal of the House; and that the enjoyment of freedom, well understood, is the best security for national independence; from it alone can spring that enthusiasm which, at the

present important and momentous crisis, is essential to the defence, perhaps to the existence, of the empire; and that the petitioners cannot be charged with any political delinquency, on the score of religious tenets no objection can be made to their claims; whereas foreigners of their persuasion, without connection or property in the country (of whose sincerity and loyalty the petitioners entertain no doubt), are admitted to posts of trust and honour, from which the petitioners are excluded; and that this political anomaly, this inversion of things, is unnatural as it is unaccountable; nor is it less so that catholics of the 19th century should be deemed unworthy to enjoy the great character of liberty which those of the 13th obtained and secured, and which forms the pride and boast of Englishmen of the present day; and that, with glowing admiration, the petitioners beheld the names of their country shine conspicuous in the annals of glory in foreign climes; their valour can only be equalled by their fidelity; they cannot lament the hard fate that refused them protection and encouragement; under the banners of a British King they would emulate them in the field of fame, but would wish it to be in the service of the land of their birth and their affections; and that the loyalty and devotedness of such of their communion as have been admitted to fill inferior situations only in his Majesty's service stand unimpeached, and are not surpassed by any other denomination of his subjects; this consideration alone, as affording a pledge of what their conduct would be in the higher offices in the state, should silence the adversaries of their claims, and must, the petitioners humbly conceive, have due weight with the House; and that they approve, in all its parts, of the Petition to be preferred by their brethren the catholics of Dublin, and pray the House, that they may be considered as united with them in their temperate and constitutional demands; and therefore praying the House, to take into their most serious consideration the nature, extent and operation of the aforesaid penal laws, and, by repealing the same altogether, to restore to the catholics of Ireland those liberties so long withheld, and their due share in that constitution which the petitioners, in common with their fellow-subjects of every description, contribute, by taxes, arms and industry, to sustain and defend."—Ordered, to lie upon the table.

[DISTILLERIES OF IRELAND.] The House went into a Committee on the Irish distillery act.

Mr. Foster said, he would shortly state to the Committee, the object he had in view. Every gentleman, who was acquainted with the state of Ireland, knew that the increase of illicit distillation had become prodigiously great, ever since the prohibition of the distillation from grain; indeed, he imputed the alarming increase principally to that measure, as farmers encouraged the illicit trade in order to procure a market for their produce. So greatly had this private distilling trenched upon the lawful trade, that, in 1807, the quantity of spirits distilled by the open distilleries, was six millions of gallons, and the revenue 1,230,000*l.* while, in the last year, it had scarcely been so much as one fourth of that quantity. The inference that he drew from this was, that the *vacuum*, or intermediate quantity, between 1807 and 1809, was supplied by the illicit distillation. It was therefore necessary to look for remedy to a radical change in the system of Irish revenue, in so far as was connected with the distilleries. When he came into office, he found the system on which he had since acted in full force. It was on a wise principle, and went to encourage large stills as the means of inducing parties possessed of extensive capitals to enter into the trade. However good the principle might be, it had failed in Ireland, and the illicit traffic was carried on by small stills to an almost incredible pitch. His first object, with a view to surmount this evil, would therefore be to promote the dispersion of legal small stills, all over the country. He did not mean to discourage the large stills, but merely to give an equal chance to the small ones, by discontinuing the bounties to the former. This had partly been done in 1806, and the reduction that then took place might fairly be considered, by the great distillers, as the notice to which they were entitled, after embarking in a speculation on the authority of government, to pursue, another system. His second object would be to do away the apprehension that existed in the minds of those ready to commence distillation on a limited plan, that they would be compelled to work off in a limited time. In this point, limitations similar to those which existed in Scotland would be adopted, and stills would be averaged at 150 gallons, unless their capacity exceeded that quantity. He ac-

knowledgeed that there were some grounds for the complaints of the Irish distiller on the fluctuation of the revenue laws, and would endeavour to obviate similar complaints, in the system he now proposed to have adopted, by granting licences for three years, which would give stability to speculation, instead of for one year, as had hitherto been the practice. There was another point which was deserving of all consideration, and which he had been induced to adopt, after the most minute investigation. It was at once, to reduce the duties from their present rate, 5*s.* 8*d.* per gallon, to 2*s.* 6*d.* He was satisfied that the revenue would not suffer by this; for though in the first year there might be a risk of diminution, yet, when the illicit trade was destroyed, which he was convinced would be the tendency of this measure, the sum paid to government by the legal distiller, would much more than counterbalance the lower rate of duty. Another of his objects would be to simplify the law. Those who now entered into the distillation trade could not be expected to be men of much education. The less complicated the revenue laws were, it would be the more advantageous; he would, therefore, abolish entirely the existing distinctions and drawbacks on the quantity of malt or spirits, and simply to charge 2*s.* 6*d.* per gallon on the quantity distilled. To avoid the increased expence of collecting the revenue, he proposed to have the collectors of hearth rates and assessed taxes employed also in collecting this branch of the revenue, without the intervention of the excise. His object was to pass a law beneficial to Ireland, and he would gladly listen to suggestions from every side of the House, without thinking of party, or difference of feelings on other points. He therefore invited gentlemen to communicate to him every idea that would tend to render the measure generally useful. Revenue, though from his situation it might be thought so, was not his sole object. By the proposed system, the morals of the people also, which were so injured by those illicit stills, would be improved, and the laws, now contemned, would, by being enforced, become more respected. A dangerous class of persons would be put down. He alluded to those, who without the cognizance of, and unknown to the magistrate, kept houses for the sale of spirits, illegally distilled, under whose roofs had originated many of the evils

which had lately so much distressed Ireland. With these objects in view, he moved, "That the chairman be instructed to ask leave to bring in a bill to alter and amend the laws in force respecting the distillation in Ireland."

Sir J. Newport expressed his satisfaction at the measure proposed by the right hon. gent. and his readiness to co-operate with him as far as lay in his power, in carrying it into execution. He accorded most cordially with the proposition, which went to do what he had for the last four years pressed upon the consideration of the House.—He had ever wished to impress upon them the necessity of dispersing small stills over the country; and he had twice taken the sense of the House upon the question of withdrawing the bounties from the large stills. On one or two points of minor importance, however, he differed from the right hon. gent. He could not impute the increase of the illicit trade so much to the prohibition of distillation from grain, as it was known to exist to a very great extent before passing of that measure. Neither could he accord with the principle of survey, as necessary or beneficial to the revenue. It gave rise to frauds on the part of the trader, and corrupt connivance on the part of the excise officer. His view would be that, which, on best attention to the subject, he had ever thought the best, namely, to adopt the system of license; that was, to charge a certain duty monthly in proportion to the capacity of the still, and leave it open to the trader by his exertions to make more of it if he could. The right hon. gent. thought he had got quit of the extra expence of collecting, and the danger of frauds, &c. by taking it from the excise and entrusting it to the collectors of hearth rates and assessed taxes; but he was convinced this would never answer. Even these taxes were not too well collected now, and by adding another duty to the collectors, the revenue would suffer still more. This was the only radical point of difference between him and the right hon. gent. and this he hoped would be overcome in the Committee. The observations too of the right hon. gent. had anticipated much he had to offer, though he would still wish certain resolutions he had previously prepared to be received, and entered on the journals, as shewing his deliberate view of this important question to a country, from which he had the honour to be sent to that House.

Mr. Foster noticed, that the collectors of Assessed Taxes, &c. were released from that part of their duty, during the 6 winter months, when the distilleries were most employed, and would consequently be enabled to attend to them without inconvenience or loss to the revenue. He defended the system of survey, in opposition to that of license; and trusted the present measure would be unanimously supported by Irish gentlemen, which would convince the people of that country it was for their good, and that it would be fully enforced. The charge from surveys had arisen from 30s. to 3*l.* 6*s.* 9*d.* 18*l.* 5*d.* and up to 164*l.*—This was a proof how much it surpassed the license system.—The latter system was also rendered impossible by the Union, for the allowance of countervailing duties between England and Ireland, could never be carried into effect, when it could not be ascertained what was the incumbrance on the spirits of Ireland.

Mr. Beresford wished to know if any compensation would be made to the holders of spirits, in consequence of the reduction of the duty?

Mr. Foster said it was impossible to do so, as there would be an endless recurrence of retailer to wholesale dealer, and wholesale dealer to distiller, &c. He had also looked for precedents, and found, in the commutation of the tea tax, that no compensation had been made to the holders of tea.

Mr. Parnell said, that he could not do otherwise than concur with the plan proposed by the right hon. gent. he having in the last session repeatedly pressed upon the House the policy of adopting the regulations which were now proposed. He must, however, make an exception in respect to the way in which the duty was to be collected, because he considered the system of survey wholly unfit for the system of distilling in very small stills. The expence to be incurred by excise officers would be immense, and persons having made capitals would be afraid to place themselves under the severe regulations attending the mode of collecting an actual survey. The license system had been tried with great success in Scotland, and though of late departed from, it was not given up until it had succeeded in putting down illicit trade. He wished to suggest a preferable mode of making an allowance to the distiller using turf, to that proposed by the right hon. gent. and

that was to allow a still of a flatter shape to be worked, in place of the proposed allowance in the number of charges. This plan would be less detrimental to the revenue, and enable the distiller to work at a smaller expence in fuel; at the same time the advantage, in point of his general profit, would only be such as he ought to have, in competition with the distiller making use of coal.

Mr. *Foster* rebutted the arguments on the latter point.

Mr. *Hutchinson* remarked on the variation between the sentiments of the right hon. gent. (Mr. *Foster*), this session and the last, and accused him of disordering the revenue, enterprise, and trade of Ireland by the vacillations of his politics. He called on him to make up his mind fully and firmly, before he introduced a system so diametrically opposite to that which he had, only one year ago, pledged himself to support, and thereby induced many persons, on the faith of gentlemen, to embark large capitals in distilleries from large stills. He noticed in particular the house of Browne, Stein, and Co. in Limerick, which had launched into great speculations on the strength of the encouragement held out by the right hon. gent. He then went into a view of the proposed alteration, and contended that large stills were preferable to small ones.—This was proved by the system of distillation in England, where there were none but large stills, and illicit trade was unknown. It was farther corroborated by Scotland, where distillation from small stills was encouraged, and there was a very great proportion of illegal traffic carried on.—He concluded, by imputing the blame of the great degree of illicit trade in Ireland to Mr. *Foster*, whose system, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and with all his power, must have been bad to permit it.

Mr. *D. Browne* spoke in favour of the smaller stills, which would be universally beneficial to Ireland; though they might not answer the city which the hon. gent. represented (Cork)

The Resolution was agreed to: the House was resumed, and the Chairman of the Committee obtained leave to bring in a Bill to the effect stated by Mr. *Foster*.

[ARMY ESTIMATES.] Lord *Palmerston* moved the order of the day for the further consideration of the report on the Army Estimates. On the question being put, That the report be now taken into further consideration,

Mr. *Maurice Fitzgerald* rose for the purpose of impressing the House with the importance of ascertaining whether the expenditure contained in the estimates was absolutely necessary. This was a duty the more incumbent upon Parliament, after the various admissions they had heard of the propriety of retrenchment, but more particularly after the speech of an hon. gent. (Mr. *Huskisson*) on a former night, adopting all the views thrown out with respect to retrenchment by an hon. member behind him (Mr. *Wardle*), towards the close of the last session. But the chief importance of the statement of that hon. gent. on the former night was, that it contained the best evidence of the necessity of retrenchment, as coming from a man the best informed of any in Great Britain upon that subject. With respect to the statement made by the noble lord in opening the army estimates, as to the amount of the military force of the country being 600,000, so far from creating confidence in the country, he was convinced it would produce the contrary impression of alarm, when it was considered, that out of such a force so small a proportion could be brought into action against the enemy as had been employed in the late campaigns. It was now admitted that the taxation had reached its *maximum*; that the struggle would become every day more serious, and consequently the country be called upon for greater exertions. With a view to such exertions, he should not object to a large establishment, if that could be maintained efficiently; but when out of such an establishment so small a force could be actively employed, he thought that there must be something radically bad in its composition. It appeared, by the estimates, compared with the returns of effectives, that the House was to be called on to pay for at least 20,000 men more than were in the ranks of the army. The foreign corps on the establishment amounted to 23,955; to which it was to be proposed to-morrow to add above 30,000 Portuguese, making a total of nearly 60,000 foreign troops—a greater force of that description than had ever been employed in the service of any nation. To keep up the native force there was no prospect by the ordinary recruiting, nor by any other means than breaking up other establishments. The recruiting produced 11,000 last year; the drafts from the militia 18,043; making in the whole about 30,000 men, from which was

o be deducted, desertions 3,387, leaving tan actual accession to the army of 26,000 men only. The casualties at home, on the increased establishment, he estimated at 20,000 men; the casualties and extraordinary deaths in Spain, Portugal, and Walcheren, at the same number; so that the army had been diminished nearly 20,000, notwithstanding the accession from recruiting and the militia. The House was bound therefore to consider, whether it would not increase that class of men from which soldiers were to be procured. When retrenchments were talked of, he was surprised to find nothing in contemplation but a reduction of 20 horses per troop, and the reduction of the Manx fencibles, a corps consisting of only 347 men. He could see no reason, why so large a force of cavalry as 27,000 should be kept up, when we never had sent out more than 1,800 to Spain in the campaign under sir John Moore, and cavalry could be of no use in this country or Ireland, in the event of invasion. What he said of the regular cavalry applied equally to the volunteer cavalry. The volunteer infantry might be of some use; but he had never heard any reason assigned for keeping up such a force of volunteer cavalry.—The hon. member then proceeded to comment upon the expence and arrangements at the military college, complaining that the professor of fortifications had no more, or little more salary, than the teacher of arithmetic or fencing.—After dwelling some time on these points, and on the amount of force absorbed in the colonial service, the hon. member expressed his opinion, that the effective should be increased, by reducing the ineffective force.

General *Turleton* felt called upon, by an imperious sense of duty, to offer a few observations to the House, after what had fallen from the hon. member, and undertook to prove to the satisfaction of the House, that no reduction ought to be made in the cavalry force, which was our most useful arm. If there had been a cavalry force in Ireland at the time, gen. Humbert, with 800 men, could never have advanced 15 days march into that country. He had surveyed Ireland with a military eye, and could assert that it was peculiarly favourable for a body of cavalry to act in. Where ever gentlemen could hunt, there could cavalry act. It had been Buonaparte's uniform practice to employ large bodies of cavalry; and it was to the pressure of the French cavalry that was to be

ascribed the great loss sustained in the precipitate retreat to Corunna. An effective cavalry was a most useful, but an ineffective cavalry was a most dangerous force to employ; he thought, of course that efficient horses only should be purchased for that service. He implored his Majesty's ministers, therefore, not to suffer themselves to be persuaded, by any arguments, to make a reduction in a force so necessary to the present security and ultimate defence of the country.

Mr. *Lamb* expressed disapprobation of certain items in the estimates respecting foreign corps and temporary barracks in Ireland. But what he wished particularly to press upon the attention of the House was the enormous amount of the staff in this country, all of whom being absent from their regiments, performed no service. He could not perceive the reason why seven generals should be necessary in the home district. In the county of Herts, which formed a part of that district, some volunteers corps had been reviewed in 1805 by the duke of Cambridge, but since that period they had seen no general in that county. He did not mean to impute any blame to any of the generals, for the duty was perfectly well performed by the inspecting field-officers. It certainly did appear somewhat strange that a staff of 20 persons should be necessary for one district. As to what had fallen from the hon. gent. respecting the military college, he had only to observe, that he entertained great hopes that it would prove beneficial to the army. When he considered the moderate expence of the college, he could not but think that this expence would be amply compensated by the benefits that would result to the army from that establishment.

Mr. *Parnell* considered it a great defect in the estimates, and a great error in preparing them, that an addition of 7,000*l.* was to be made to the establishment of the war office, for the purpose of bringing up the arrears of the regimental accounts. He had also to complain, that the Report of the commissioners of military inquiry upon the subject of these arrears of accounts, had been suffered to lie on the table for two years, without having been acted upon.

Mr. *Whitbread*, perceiving no disposition in the right hon. gent. opposite to say any thing upon the subject under consideration, and feeling that it must be the wish of the noble lord (Palmerston) to

hear first all that could be urged against the estimates, in order that he might know to what he was to reply, begged to offer a few observations to the House upon the subject. This he felt it his duty to do, however reluctant he might be to occupy the attention of the House on that occasion. And here he could not help expressing the great satisfaction he felt at the ability with which the army estimates had been opened, in the perspicuous speech of the noble lord. It was the more gratifying to him to pay this tribute to the talents of that noble lord, because his latter speech in reply was even more creditable to him than the first on his opening. But he had risen chiefly for the purpose of calling for explanation upon some points in the estimates, which, notwithstanding the luminous speech of the noble lord, still required to be explained. The House was indebted to an hon. friend of his for having the estimates printed; and he was sure that no gentleman could look through them, and not be convinced that several points required explanation. There was one item for various contingencies amounting to 32,000*l.* without any specification of the contingencies thus provided for, which particularly required explanation. Many jobs might be introduced under this head of contingencies; and he was therefore desirous to know whether there would be any objection to giving a detailed account of these contingencies? This was rendered the more necessary, as on the night before the last the House had come to a vote, that no account was to be produced of the application of the sums voted last year. When such a vote had been given respecting past expenditure, it became his duty, and that of the House, to be the more cautious how they voted money now, without knowing in what manner it was to be applied. It was, therefore, his intention to move an amendment to the motion put from the chair, by proposing to leave out the word "now," for the purpose of inserting the words, "this day se'nnight." The right hon. gent. had a vote on which he could ground the Mutiny bill; no mischief could consequently result from that short delay; and as the various accounts in the estimates required to be maturely considered before they should be voted, he did not think it too much to expect that his amendment should be acceded to. Every item of the public expenditure ought to be scrupulously ex-

amined, but more particularly, after the speeches of the right hon. and hon. gentlemen opposite (Messrs. Rose and Huskisson) on a former night.—As to the question of the mounting of the cavalry, much difference of opinion seemed to prevail, and consequently some time might be necessary in order, upon due and deliberate consideration, to reconcile such differences. For his own part, he thought it much better to purchase efficient horses at 75*l.* than to purchase horses not fit to work at 25*l.* each. Most of the horses sent out to Spain would never be fit for use; because the mode of training horses for the cavalry was likely to render them unfit for service, unless they were of the proper age when taken into training. He was of opinion that none ought to be purchased under the age of four or five years, in which case their immediate fitness for service would compensate for the difference of price, which could in no case be equal to the expence of keeping and training young horses.—The arrangement respecting the Manx fencibles drew a laugh from the noble lord himself, whilst stating it. The Manx fencibles were said to be intended to act against smugglers, whilst, according to every account, they were themselves the greatest smugglers in the island. He next came to the head respecting the local militia, which it was proposed to reduce in point of expenditure. Both he and an hon. friend, when the proposition for establishing the local militia was brought forward, had foretold all that had since happened. They had said that the expence would be enormous; they were told, no, it would be moderate; they had said that the establishment would interfere with the agriculture of the country; they were told, no, the farmers would be glad of it. They had said that the measure in its progress would unsettle the occupations and habits of the people: the answer was, no, the men would return cheerfully from their training to their former occupations and ordinary business. But what was the case now? Why, the House was told that the expence was so enormous, that unless it could be reduced, the establishment should be given up; that the number of days of exercise should be reduced; and that the habits acquired on duty tended to unsettle the occupations of the country. He was willing to attempt to make the local militia an efficient body, without the expence of

the staff. But he was apprehensive, that the sum proposed this year would not be sufficient. The sum voted last year was one million; the sum to be voted this year was 600,000*l.* The local militia was to amount to six times the number of the regular militia. In his county, not one half of the local militia had been out on duty, or received their clothing. In other counties, they had not been called out at all. He should be glad, therefore, to know whether the whole of the money voted last year had been spent. This the right hon. gent. had refused to let the House know, and on this ground he was cautious of voting more money till he should know how it was to be applied. He was well assured that not a man could take the field that did not cost government eight pounds for his clothing, and not a man could be trained at a less expence than eight pounds more; so that in the year of clothing each local militia-man would cost the country 16*l.* All he wanted to know then, was, what portion of the local militia had been furnished with clothing last year, and what part was to be clad during the present. He wished to be informed of the expenditure of the past year, in order that he might judge of the correctness of the estimates for the present year. If in a man's private concerns, he were to be asked for the expences of this week, would he not call for an account of the expenditure of the past week? He was confident on this subject that the whole of the local militia had not either been clothed, trained, or armed last year, and as a member of that House, he felt that he had a right to call for information how far the money granted last session for that service had been expended upon it. The noble lord had stated that the expence was to be reduced in the present year. Perhaps it might not be the intention of the right hon. gent. to call out the whole of that force, or to furnish it with clothing this year. It had been said, indeed that this force could not be rendered efficient, but he was not one of those who thought it might not be rendered an efficient force even without the staff, by the attention of the country gentlemen commanding the corps and connected with its formation. He was confident, that if the regiments of local militia were to be sent out on duty for a month, they would acquire, if not a perfect knowledge of discipline, considerable dexterity in the use of arms.—Much had

been done in many cases by individual exertion; though, in several other instances, he feared that little had been done, because scarcely any thing was attempted. Upon the subject of the waggon train, he had but one observation to make. Either it was a good corps to be kept up, or it was not; if it was good, why reduce it? and if not good, why not do it away altogether? Five troops, it appeared, were to be reduced, and seven kept up, on the ground that five were serving advantageously with lord Wellington's army. It had been said, indeed, that lord Wellington thought well of the services of this corps; but this was the authority of that noble person against his own authority on a former occasion; for it was well known that lord Wellington had given that corps a far different character in a former instance. But though it might be desirable to keep up the part of the corps serving with lord Wellington's army for the present, he would ask, why measures had not been taken for its reduction whenever that army should return, if ever, as he sincerely hoped it should return, to this country? The enormous expence of the staff he considered so glaring, that he could not think it necessary to employ any argument to impress the House with the propriety as well as the necessity of very extensive retrenchment in that department. There was another item also in these estimates which deserved the particular attention of the House; that which regarded the establishment of a new army medical board. A noble lord (Temple) had given notice of a motion on this subject; but though he was not disposed to anticipate the discussion, still he must offer a few words on it. The old medical board had fairly run itself out:—it no longer existed. It stood exposed in all its nakedness, and was at length actually dismissed.—But was the army likely to gain by the change? Was the new establishment to be more efficient? He had heard that the members of it were to receive increased salaries, because they had consented to give up their private practice.—It was certainly but fair, if gentlemen, for public services, were taken from situations or professions of great emolument, that they should be indemnified for any loss they might sustain by the change; but was this the case with the members of the new board? So far from it, that he understood that two, if not the whole three of them, had retired

from practice for several years. He had felt it his duty to make some enquiry into the history of these gentlemen. One of them he learned was upwards of 70, almost as old, indeed, as sir Lucas Pepys, who was so old, in fact, that he was not capable of discharging his duty. The person he meant was Dr. Weir, who was a surgeon's mate in 1761, 49 years ago. Him they put at the head of the new medical board, having broken up the former for inefficiency. Dr. Ker was between 50 and 60 years old, was an hospital mate in 1766, and took a degree some years ago in Edinburgh. He, as well as the head of the board, had retired. Dr. Gordon, he understood, had also retired into the country. What practice, he would ask, had these people given up to entitle them to increased salaries? He could not but consider the increase of salary to them, therefore, as a most wanton and censurable waste of the public money. It was singular, too, that the whole of these gentlemen had come from the north of the Tweed. He did not mean to throw any imputation on that part of the empire, for many natives of which he had the highest respect. The selection, however, might be easily accounted for: the Commander in Chief was of the same country, between 70 and 80; and it was very natural that he should have a partiality for persons nearly of his own age and of his own nation.

But whatever the decision of the House might be, for the present, respecting the new establishment, he trusted the old medical board would not escape inquiry; that they would not be dismissed retaining their salaries. If it should be found they had done injury to the medical service of the army, they deserved to be punished. Two out of the three of these accused their colleague of having killed some thousands of the army by the error and insufficiency of his practice and arrangements. Was not this a subject for inquiry? If one of them was so old that he could not do his business—if he knew nothing of camps, and the diseases incident to a campaign, the knowledge of which was essential to the situation he filled, would the House agree to vote such a man remuneration? Before he would vote a shilling for the new establishment, he would insist on a thorough investigation into the old. They might all deserve punishment, but none could merit remuneration. He could not, therefore, as he had

before stated, consent to vote the Estimates, without knowing how the money was spent. He regretted that a right hon. gent. (Mr. Yorke) who was always so prominent on questions relating to military affairs, was not in the House to deliver his opinion on these estimates. He considered it very extraordinary too, that he should have vacated his seat on the very day they were proposed. He recollected well that in a debate on the same subject last session, that honourable member had felt it his duty to criticize the army estimates. He put some very pointed questions to the then secretary at war relating to the measures taken for the defence of the coast. He asked whether they were in that formidable condition that if Buonaparte by chance should sail by, he would pull off his hat, and say, "gentlemen, your humble servants, I see I cannot attack you." The right hon. member might have made a similar observation when he vacated his seat, and secured a snug sinecure. He might have said to the abolitionists, "Gentlemen, your humble servant, you may now do what you please with your bill, it won't affect me."—He recollected to have heard an observation of an hon. member of that House, who had shared the fate of many administrations. "Good God!" says he, "how different a man feels in and out of office!" There was another hon. gent. in his eye (Mr. Huskisson,) whose conduct in a late debate shewed, that a man might not only feel, but speak very differently in and out of office.

The speech of that hon. gent. on that occasion, was directly the reverse of what he had tried to instil last session to the propositions submitted to the House by his hon. friend (Mr. Warley) behind him. For the hon. gent. commenced in perfect sobriety a great deal of that which his hon. friend had perhaps indiscreetly declared in a convivial moment. His hon. friend had declared, that it was possible to save ten millions, or to the amount of the income tax, out of the annual expenditure of the country. Now the time he selected for making this declaration, was the worst he could choose, namely, after a tavern-dinner; and, probably, at a time when the best financier in the company was not in a condition to divide the dinner-bill. And yet it was upon an inconsiderate declaration of this kind, and the applause that it excited, that his hon. friend chose to found a statement which tended to



render every suggestion of public economy ridiculous. Save ten millions! why his hon. friend reflected so little on what he was pledging himself to, that one glass more might have made it seventy millions. It was natural enough that his hon. friend, who was at that time in the high tide of his well-deserved popularity, should have thrown out in the gaiety of the moment so extravagant an expectation; but it was most extraordinary that he should come down to the House, and endeavour to establish such a statement. And how did he propose to effect this vast saving? Why, by wholly abolishing some of the most necessary branches of the public expenditure, by reforming others, by dribbling cabbaged from this office and that department. Such inconsiderate proposals might be productive of great danger and detriment to the country. They tended to bring all plans of reform and economy into disrepute, to render them ridiculous, and to make those who proposed them, pass for extravagant and visionary speculators. But when the hon. gent. (Mr. Huskisson) came forward with suggestions of economical reform, he was entitled to greater respect. No one could suspect him of making inconsiderate and ill-digested propositions. For himself, he could not, entertaining, as he did, the highest opinion of the talents of that hon. gent. and his perfect acquaintance with every branch of the public expenditure, he considered his secession from the administration as by far the greatest loss it had sustained. A successor indeed (Mr. Wharton) had been found, but the House could already judge of the difference between them. The place, no doubt was filled, but it was not supplied. That a great saving, however, could be effected, they had the assurance of the hon. gent. in the late debate. His speech on that occasion was a counterpart of that of his hon. friend last session (Mr. Wardle) and the most complete answer that could be given to the reply which he then made, and which reply was published as a pamphlet.—But, whatever the saving might be, or to what extent it might be carried, it was impossible it could have much effect, constituted as the government now was—a government made up of jarring and discordant parts subject to no superior controul. The first lord of the treasury had no controul over the admiralty, and yet they were called on by him to vote money for the use of the admiralty. The first lord of the treasury had no controul over the ordnance,

for the master general of the ordnance denied his authority. The first lord of the treasury had no command over the army at all, for that was exclusively in the commander in chief. Was this the way in which things were to be carried on? Independent departments all pulling different ways, but all drawing on the first lord of the treasury, without estimate, plan, or calculation of any sort! Nothing could more fully prove the mischief and confusion likely to arise from this system, than the speech of one of the right hon. gent.'s former colleagues. The necessity of a great and comprehensive system of national economy was becoming more evident every day. If they did not curtail, they could not go on long, said the hon. gent. (Mr. Huskisson) on the floor, and so should he say too. But he had been frequently himself reminded of the imprudence of any disclosures respecting the weakness or probable exhaustion of our finances. He was told that his speeches would go to America, and that they would encourage that country to exact greater terms, than she otherwise might. It was said they might go to France and encourage that power to insist on higher conditions than she might have been disposed to accept. Buonaparté, it was said, was directing the whole of his attention to the ruin of our finances; and would, he had been asked, he be the first to assure him, that his plan must prove ultimately successful? He did not suppose he would believe him if he did. He would perhaps rather consider him as a person, who wanted to get a place, and who would stick at no assertion that might contribute to turn the person out of it, by whom it was occupied. But when this avowal came from a person who had been a member of administration, it would have a hundred times the weight. What would the *Moniteur* say when it was avowed that the chief, if not only *rectigal* of England, was *parsimonia*? When the same lavish grants were called for, and it was declared that we were ruined if they did not go on, would not the Frenchmen toss their caps in the air, and cry, "Aye, now the thing is done. Don't you hear the enemy say they have no hopes but from economy? and yet they are going on in their usual career of extravagance." Ministers, in fact, were going on as if the national resources were infinite. At the very moment that they were burthening the people with a pension of 2,000*l.* per

annum to lord Wellington, they bestowed a sinecure office of 4,000*l.* a year.—(No, no, from the Treasury Bench, it is only 2,700*l.*)—Well then, 2,700*l.* a year (the amount of the sum made no difference in the argument) on a person that quitted no profession, who incurred no dangers, who subjected himself to no hardships or privations, and who rendered no services to the country, that he had ever heard of: these were the circumstances which excited and fed the general indignation and suspicion that were too apt to be entertained against public men. Those things, as well as others, were at length unmasked, but now the secret was disclosed. It was let out by the person who had been behind the curtain.—If we continued in this career of extravagance, how could we maintain war? How could we procure peace? He deprecated that impious and execrable doctrine, that we were to be engaged in perpetual war with France, or at least during the life-time of Buonaparté. He trusted the day would come, even during the life of that extraordinary man, that we could obtain peace on terms becoming our honour; but he would not, by voting for these estimates, put it out of his power to retrench. He would reserve the means of seeking for peace, as peace should be sought. If we did not retrench, it was possible that we might at last be obliged to seek for peace on our knees. He wished for peace, and therefore he wished to be put in a condition to make peace respectably. For these reasons he felt himself compelled to say, that he would not vote for the army estimates on that day. There were many of the items that were extremely objectionable. He would mention one; that which proposed a remuneration to the medical board. It was one, he was persuaded, which would create great dissatisfaction in the army and in the country. Such was the public opinion of the misconduct of that board, that any proposition for rewarding them must be heard with displeasure. However inconsiderable the sum might be in the great scale of national expenditure, in taking it off, they took off thousands of pounds of disgust. He could not consent to receive the report now. He wished for further time; he was not master of the subject. He wished to know how the money had been last year spent. He could not agree, without full and ample enquiry, to vote a shilling to such a lord of the treasury, surrounded by rapacious

colleagues, he meant in their departments, tearing him to pieces, like a parcel of prodigal sons, exclaiming, "Pay my debts, pay my debts," to a father who had no controul over them. The hon. member concluded a most able and animated speech, by moving, That the report be read on that day se'nnight; and observed, that if he carried the question, he should move, that certain items in the estimates be referred to a select committee.

Lord *Palmerston*, in reply, re-stated, and justified different items in the proposed reduction. The new medical board was composed of members, who, whether they came from the north or from the south, whether they were old or young, were perfectly efficient, and had every one of them been recommended by a board of general officers.

Lord *Castlereagh* stated, that inquiry had been made into the conduct of the late medical board, by a board of general officers, at the head of which was general Fox, who reported that they had not neglected their duty. The noble lord also stated, that notwithstanding the losses of the two last campaigns, the number of the regular army was greater now by 54,000, than it was on the 24th of March, 1807, when the former administration quitted office. The ordinary recruiting was found to nearly supply the ordinary waste. What stronger proof could there be of the efficiency of the system?

Mr. *Whitbread* did not mean to impute blame to the government for the conduct of the medical board. With respect to the estimates, he did not know whether it would not be more prudent to refer them to a select committee, before the House were called on to vote.

Mr. *Huskisson* complained of having been misconceived, and consequently misrepresented by the hon. gent. He denied that the speech to which the hon. gent. had alluded was a counterpart of the other hon. gentleman's (Mr. Wardle). He defended himself from the imputation of throwing indiscriminate censure upon his Majesty's ministers, but admitted that he had some doubts as to the policy of continuing the excess of expenditure referred to in his speech on a former night.

Lord *Folkestone* defended Mr. Edmund Knight, who had been alluded to in terms of harshness in the course of the debate, from the imputation of blame cast upon his conduct in the medical department of the late expedition.

Sir J. Newport objected entirely to the estimate relating to the barrack department in Ireland.

Mr. W. Pole replied at considerable length to the hon. baronet, and warmly supported the estimate of which he complained.

Mr. Wardle asked the noble secretary for the war department, who the barrack-master-general was, who, it appeared on the face of the estimates, had retired on a pension of 691*l.* per annum.

Lord Palmerston replied, that to the best of his recollection the gentleman alluded to was general De Lancey.

Mr. Huskisson spoke in favour of the mode adopted by government of rewarding that officer.

Mr. W. Smith deprecated the appointment as an unnecessary piece of extravagance, and an additional burthen upon the country.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* disagreed with the hon. gent. in the view he had taken upon the subject, thinking as he did, that the services of so meritorious an officer ought to meet with an adequate reward. The right hon. gent. entered into a defence of all the items of estimates in the account before the House, except that relating to the Home Staff, which he confessed ought to undergo some revision; and entertaining such an opinion, he de-

clared that he would not divide the House upon that point.

Mr. Bankes, Mr. H. Thornton, and Mr. Giles, and Sir C. Barrard, declared their determination to vote in favour of the amendment—and Mr. Dundas opposed it.

Mr. Whitbread, in reply, said he should not divide the House upon his Amendment, but he did hope that some of the items he should name would be reserved for further consideration. He particularly mentioned those relating to the Home Staff, the Medical Department, and the Local Militia, all of which he moved should be taken into further consideration on this day fortnight.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* professed his willingness to agree with the hon. gentleman's proposition, of deferring the consideration of the Home Staff subject; but to the others he felt it his duty, gave his positive dissent.

The question on Mr. Whitbread's Amendment was then put from the Chair, and negatived without a division; and the original question for taking the report of the Committee of Supply 'now' into consideration was carried in the affirmative. The House then agreed to all the resolutions of its Committee, excepting that relating to the Home Staff, the further consideration of which was postponed until this day fortnight.

# APPENDIX

## TO THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

### VOL. XV.

#### APPENDIX, No. I.

PAPERS RELATING TO THE EXPEDITION TO THE SCHELDT.—*Presented by his Majesty's Command, to both Houses of Parliament, January 1810.*

#### A.

DISPATCHES FROM VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH,  
THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL, &c.

No. I.—*Dispatch from Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, 16th July, 1809.*

My lord; I am commanded by his Majesty to transmit to your lordship the inclosed Instructions under the sign manual for the direction of your conduct in the service which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to confide to your lordship's direction.—I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

(Inclosure referred to in No. I.)

George R.—Instructions to our right trusty and well-beloved cousin and counsellor, John, Earl of Chatham, knight of the most noble order of the Garter, lieutenant general of our forces. Given at our Court at St. James's, this 16th day of July, 1809, in the 49th year of our reign.

Whereas we have thought fit to appoint you to command a large division of our forces, which we have directed to be assembled and transported to the Scheldt, in order to attack and destroy the naval force and establishments which the enemy is so rapidly accumulating in that river, in the island of Walcheren and at Antwerp. You are therefore upon the receipt of these our Instructions to repair with our said troops to the above destination, and there to carry into effect the following orders, in conjunction with the commander of our naval forces who shall accompany you in this Expedition.—You will consider that this conjoint Expedition has for its object the capture or de-

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struction of the enemy's ships, either building at Antwerp and Flushing, or afloat in the Scheldt, the destruction of the arsenals and dock yards at Antwerp, Terneuse, and Flushing; the reduction of the island of Walcheren, and the rendering if possible the Scheldt no longer navigable for ships of war.—If the attainment of all the above-mentioned objects should be rendered impossible by the enemy collecting in such strength as to render perseverance inconsistent with the security of the army, you are in that case to use your utmost endeavours, in concert with the officer commanding the naval force, to secure as many of the objects as circumstances will permit, and so soon as the services shall be completed, or such part thereof as is attainable, you will take immediate measures for re-embarking the army and returning with it to England, leaving a sufficient force to maintain possession of the island of Walcheren till our further pleasure shall be signified.—During your continuance on this service, you are to send, or cause to be sent to us through one of our principal secretaries of state, constant accounts of all that passes, and you are to follow all such orders and directions as we shall send you, either under our sign manual, or through one of our principal secretaries of state.

G. R.

No. II.—*Dispatch from Lord Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, 16th July 1809.*

My lord; The King having, by his royal commission, appointed your lordship to be commander of his forces in the conjoint Expedition which his Majesty has determined to send to the Scheldt; and

(A)

his Majesty having by his royal Instructions, signified to your lordship his pleasure with respect to the objects and execution thereof; I am, in obedience to his Majesty's commands, to inclose to you, all such statements and particulars of intelligence in any degree connected with the proposed service, which are to be found among the records of this office, or which I have been enabled otherwise to procure.—I also transmit a statement of the amount of force, both naval and military, which has been ordered to proceed on this conjoint Expedition.—I am commanded to state to your lordship, that his Majesty feels assured that his army and navy will vie with each other in giving effect to an enterprize, than which none has been confided of greater importance to their united efforts; and as the surest means of successfully surmounting every obstacle, his Majesty trusts that the utmost spirit of concert and harmony will prevail throughout the whole of the operations between the respective services. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

(Inclosure No. 1, referred to in No. II.)

#### AMOUNT OF NAVAL FORCE.

Thirty-five sail of the line.—2 ships of 50 guns.—3 do. of 44.—18 frigates.—33 sloops.—5 bomb vessels.—23 gun brigs; five carrying mortars.—17 hired cutters.—14 revenue vessels.—5 tenders.—82 gun boats.—Together with the craft employed in his Majesty's dock yards.

*Admiralty, 11th July 1809.*

(Inclosure, No. 2, referred to in No. II.)

RETURN of the regiments now under orders for foreign service, shewing the probable number of rank and file, which will embark with each corps, leaving behind such men as are at present unfit for duty.

*Adj. General's Office,*

*15th July, 1809.*

#### Cavalry.

Third Dragoons	..... 6 troops	..... 510
Ninth Light do.	... do.	..... 510
Twelfth do.	..... do.	..... 510
Sec. Germ. Lt. Drag.	do.	..... 580
Third do.	..... 2 troops	..... 152
Waggon Train	..... 5 do.	..... 395

2,657

#### Artillery.

Horse Artillery	..... 1 troop	..... 150
Foot do.	..... 16 companies	1839

Gunner Drivers	.....	1043
		3,032

#### Foot Guards.

First Foot Guards	.. 1st. battalion	... 1329
Do.	..... 3rd do.	..... 1101
Flank Companies	.....	437
		2,867

#### Infantry.

Royals	..... 3rd battalion	... 957
Second Foot	..... do.	833
Fourth	..... 1st	1000
Do.	..... 2nd	930
Fifth	..... 1st	939
Sixth	..... 1st	971
Eighth	..... 2 companies	200
Ninth	..... 1st battalion	932
Eleventh	..... 2nd	839
Fourteenth	..... 2nd	781
Twentieth	.....	873
Twenty-3rd, 4 Coms.	2nd	400
Twenty-sixth	..... 1st	687
Twenty-eighth	... 1st	650
Thirty-second	..... 1st	579
Thirty-fifth	..... 2nd	737
Thirty-sixth	..... 1st	657
Thirty-eighth	..... 1st	793
Forty-second	..... 1st	799
Forty-third	..... 2nd	604
Fiftieth	..... 1st	853
Fifty-first	.....	652
Fifty-second	..... 2nd	413
Fifty-ninth	..... 2nd	740
Sixty-third	..... 2nd	400
Sixty-eighth	.....	777
Seventy-first	..... 1st	963
Seventy-sixth	.....	742
Seventy-seventh	.....	559
Seventy-ninth	.....	1003
Eighty-first	..... 2nd battalion	661
Eighty-second	..... 1st	1000
Eighty-fourth	..... 2nd	855
Eighty-fifth	.....	581
Ninety-first	..... 1st	660
Ninety-second	..... 1st	987
Ninety-fifth	..... 2nd	1000
Staff Corps	..... 2 companies	100
First Germ. Lt. Batt.	.....	704
Second	.....	613
Embodied Detachs.	.....	800

30,229

#### ABSTRACT.

Cavalry	.....	2,657
Artillery	.....	3,032
Foot Guards	.....	2,867

Infantry .....	30,229
	<hr/> 38,785
Increase of Cavalry .....	510
	<hr/> 39,295
Deduct two troops withdrawn	152
	<hr/> 39,143
Total.....	<hr/> 39,143

N. B. A regiment of Dragoons will be named for service instead of the two troops of the Third German Light Dragoons.

It is expected that the regiments will embark something stronger than is here stated. (Signed) HARRY CALVERT,  
Adjutant General.

No. III.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, 8th August 1809.

My lord; I have the satisfaction of acknowledging the receipt of your lordship's dispatches of the 2d and 3d inst., from Middleburg, which were immediately submitted to the King.—His Majesty has commanded me to signify to your lordship his most gracious approbation of the promptitude with which your lordship has commenced, and the vigour with which you have conducted your operations against the enemy.—The rapidity with which possession has been acquired of the islands of South Beveland and Walcheren, with the exception of the fortress of Flushing, is the best proof of the zeal and energy with which the ulterior objects of the Expedition will be prosecuted.—The honourable testimony borne by your lordship to the enterprize, discipline, and courage, which has marked the conduct of the troops in presence of the enemy, has afforded his Majesty the highest satisfaction. Your lordship will be pleased to signify to lieutenant-general sir Eyre Coote, the general and other officers employed on this occasion under your lordship's personal command, as also to the troops in general, the sense his Majesty entertains of their services, and the confidence his Majesty feels in their future good conduct. I fulfil with great personal satisfaction the duty thus assigned me, of conveying to your lordship the King's entire approbation of the whole of your proceedings, in the execution of the orders which your lordship has received from his Majesty. I am, &c. CASTLEREAGH.

No. IV.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, 12th August 1809.

My lord; Your dispatches of the 7th and 8th inst. have been received and laid before the King. His Majesty has observed with satisfaction, the continued good conduct of the troops, as manifested in the spirit with which the sortie on the part of the enemy, on the evening of the 8th, was repulsed by the brigade under the orders of major gen. Graham.—It is much to be regretted that the weather has proved so unfavourable, more especially to the naval branch of your operations; I trust, however, the last few days may have afforded an opportunity to the fleet effectually to cut off the communication between Flushing and Cadsand, and to make arrangements on the West Scheldt, for protecting the movements of the army in advance. I am, &c. CASTLEREAGH.

No. V.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, 21st August 1809.

My lord; Your lordship's dispatch of the 10th, entrusted to major Bradford, was immediately laid before the King. His Majesty has commanded me to express to your lordship the great satisfaction with which his Majesty has received the intelligence of the surrender of the fortress of Flushing, in consequence of exertions so honourable to those employed on the occasion, and which his Majesty observes with pleasure, have not been attended with any serious loss to the army and navy.—It is his Majesty's command, that your lordship should signify to lieutenant-general sir Eyre Coote, the general and other officers and troops employed, and particularly those of the artillery and engineer departments, his Majesty's gracious approbation of their services, in terminating so honourably an operation which has presented so many occasions of proving their courage, discipline and skill in presence of the enemy.—His Majesty rejoices, that this serious obstacle to the vigorous prosecution of the ulterior objects of the Expedition, has thus been seasonably overcome; and his Majesty feels persuaded that those important objects will be followed up without a moment's loss of time, with the same energy, perseverance and rapidity, which has hitherto distinguished the course of your lordship's operations.—His Majesty has been pleased

entirely to approve of the terms granted to the garrison of Flushing; and has observed, with particular pleasure, the powerful effect as well as the marked cordiality with which his army and navy have combined their exertions on the present occasion. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

No. VI.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, dated 2d Sept. 1809.

My lord; Your lordship's dispatch of the 29th ult. from Batz has been received and laid before the King.—Under the opinion stated by your lordship that the ulterior objects of the Expedition, so far as relates to operations against Antwerp and the enemy's fleet, are no longer practicable, in which opinion the lieutenant-generals of the army appear unanimously to have concurred. I have only to convey to your lordship the King's commands that, after providing effectually for the security of Walcheren, you do return with the remainder of the army to England.—I am to express, however, to your lordship his Majesty's confident persuasion that, previous to your return, and in conformity to your Instructions, your lordship will co-operate with the navy in giving effect to any measures sir Richard Strachan may think fit to adopt for obstructing the navigation of the Scheldt, and that your lordship will also confer with that officer upon the practicability of destroying any works the enemy may have constructed at Terneuse, should they be found of sufficient importance to justify the undertaking of operations against them. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

No. VII.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, dated 2d Sept. 1809.

My Lord; The orders transmitted for the return of the army to England with the exception of the force requisite for the defence of Walcheren, makes it desirable that I should receive from your lordship a full report upon the state and deficiencies of that island without loss of time, for the consideration of his Majesty's ministers; also with respect to the amount of force that may be requisite to defend it, and the expence which it may be necessary to incur for covering the troops, and repairing and improving the works. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

No. VIII.—DISPATCH from Lord Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Chatham, dated 3d Sept. 1809.

My Lord; I have received his Majesty's commands, to signify to your lordship, his Majesty's gracious permission, to return to England with the troops ordered home, or so soon after as your lordship may have completed, at Walcheren, the arrangements which the public service may appear to you to require. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

No. IX.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to Sir Eyre Coote, dated 3d Sept. 1809.

Sir; I have received your letter of the 31st ult. with its inclosures, requiring additional medical assistance for the troops in the island of Walcheren, in consequence whereof I have desired the Commander in Chief to instruct the Medical Board to send out without delay the assistance you have required, and also a sufficient quantity of such medicines as may best be suited to remedy and counteract the disorders there prevalent; and I have also desired the Commander in Chief, to consider what additional comforts may be necessary for the troops. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

No. X.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to the Officer commanding his Majesty's troops in Walcheren, dated 6th Sept. 1809.

Sir; As it will in all probability be necessary that the troops in Walcheren should be furnished with water from England, I am to acquaint you, that the necessary measures will be taken for ensuring as extensive a supply of that article as possible.—But as the state of the weather may occasionally be such as to interrupt the regular transmission of this supply, it is of great consequence that no unnecessary waste of water should be permitted, and that the greatest care should be taken in order to prevent the casks in which it will be contained from being damaged or destroyed by the troops. You will therefore take such measures as you may deem most effectual for this purpose, and will cause to be transmitted to me a weekly return of water in hand, and the quantity consumed per day.—It is conceived that a weekly supply of 500 tons of water will be sufficient; but if necessary, there can be no difficulty in increasing the quantity to any amount that may be required. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

P. S. You will feel the necessity of confining the consumption of the water thus to be sent from England to the same purposes as the rules of the navy prescribe when at sea; it being impossible, consistent with a due attention to economy, to furnish a sufficient supply, either for washing or culinary purposes in general.

No. XI.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh, to the Earl of Chatham, dated 9th Sept. 1809.

My lord; The painful and indeed alarming accounts received of the progress of disease, amongst the troops under your command, has created the utmost anxiety in the minds of his Majesty's government.—Every arrangement which has been suggested, for the removal of the sick to England, and for the accommodation of those which are to remain, has been ordered.—I cannot, however, avoid desiring your lordship will include, in the report called for on the island of Walcheren, such information as may enable his Majesty's servants to judge of the general influence, to be apprehended from the nature of the climate, upon the troops required for its defence. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

No. XII.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to Sir Eyre Coote, dated 24th Sept. 1809.

Sir; I have received and laid before the King, your dispatch of the 17th inst., brought by capt. Worsley, respecting the sickness which seems increasing among the troops under your command. The first representation did not fail to excite the most immediate exertions for alleviating the calamity by which the army was visited. You are already in possession of the Orders which were at first given upon the subject, and I now inclose to you a Report of the measures which have been taken here, and also a copy of a Letter which I yesterday addressed to the Commander in Chief, the directions in which you will follow; likewise a Return of the Transport Tonnage, which either remains at Flushing, or has been ordered thither.—When you consider the number of medical assistants already sent to Walcheren, and reflect upon the previous necessity of succouring the demand for aid to the wounded in Spain, you must feel how extremely difficult, if not impossible, it must be to provide an adequate supply for a calamity so sudden and so extensive.

Every possible exertion has been made and will continue to be made, for the relief of the troops, and I have no doubt, that you will not fail to call in the aid of every assistance which can be procured from the resources of the island for their comfort.—That part of your dispatch, which relates to the decreasing state of security of the island from an hostile attack, is under consideration. I have, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

(First Inclosure, referred to in No. XII.)

*Quarter Master Gen.'s Office,*  
19th Sept. 1809.

MEMORANDUM.—Upon the 4th August, the general officers commanding in the Eastern District, Kent, Portsmouth, and Western Districts, were directed to select a proportion of barracks for the reception of sick and wounded men, in the event of their return from Walcheren. These arrangements were completed and approved in by the Commander Chief upon the 11th instant. In the Eastern District, accommodation was prepared for 1962 sick at Harwich, Ipswich, Yarmouth, Norwich. In Kent for 1250, at Deal and the Isle of Thanet, independent of 113 sick already accommodated. At Portsmouth, the accommodation, including Haslar Naval Hospital, extended to 1700. In the Western District, hospital accommodation for 500 men was fixed.—Some alteration in the barrack accommodation in the Portsmouth district, afterwards took place previous to the arrival of any sick at that port, chiefly upon account of receiving men, sent from the dépôt in the Isle of Wight, to make room for the duke of Brunswick Oels' corps.

Upon the 9th instant, the Commander in Chief having learnt the alarming progress in the sickness of the army under the command of lieut. gen. the earl of Chatham, directed the general officers commanding in the eastern district, Kent and Portsmouth districts, to open such quarters, and to encamp such troops, as might be necessary to accommodate any unforeseen number of troops or sick, which it might become necessary to disembark in those districts.

Upon the 13th instant, the Commander in Chief further directed the general officers commanding in the Eastern and Kent districts, to set apart quarters for such convalescent men as could not join their regiments or the dépôts of their different corps, in order to prevent the bar-



racks upon the coast, destined for the first reception of sick, from being over-crowded. These arrangements have hitherto completely answered the purposes intended, and will continue so long as the return of sick from the continent may render them necessary. (Signed) ALEX. HOPE.

Dep. Quarter Master Gen.

(Second Inclosure referred to in No. XII.)

*Middleburgh, 11th Sept. 1809.*

Sir; The communication I have been honoured with from lieut. gen. the earl of Chatham, is of so important a nature, that I must beg leave to trouble his lordship with more detailed observations on the subject, than I should presume to do on any ordinary occasion.

Independent of the existing records of the unhealthiness of Zealand, every object around us depicts it in the most forcible manner; the bottom of every canal that has communication with the sea is thickly covered with an ooze, which when the tide is out emits a most offensive and noisome effluvia; every ditch is filled with water which is loaded with animal and vegetable substances in a state of putrefaction; and the whole island is so flat, and so near the level of the sea, that a large proportion of it is little better than a swamp, and there is scarcely a place where water of a tolerable good quality can be procured.—The effect of all these causes of disease is strongly marked in the appearance of the inhabitants, the greater part of whom are pale and listless. Scurphula is a very general complaint among them. The children are sickly, and many of the grown persons are deformed.—The endemic diseases of this country, remittent and intermittent fevers, begin to appear about the middle of Aug. and continue to prevail until the commencement of frosty weather checks the exhalations from the earth, gives tone to the debilitated frames of the people, and stops thereby the further progress of the complaints. It is computed that nearly a third of the inhabitants are attacked with fever every sickly season.—If individuals who have lived in this island from their infancy, who observe a degree of cleanliness that can scarcely be surpassed, and who live in spacious apartments, cannot obviate the effects of the climate; it may naturally be concluded what a foreign army must suffer by being exposed, in the first instance, to excessive fatigue, and

to the inclemency of the weather, and afterwards by being crowded into barracks, where, under the most favourable circumstances, the sudden transition must have produced a severe and extended disease.—The health which the troops enjoyed during the active operations, was but a proof, as I have already had the honour to state to his lordship, that the powers of body and mind, when their energies are called into action, resist for a time the causes of disease. The fever which now unhappily prevails in the army, first appeared among the battalions which were cantoned in South Beveland, and only began to demonstrate its influence here about the time that Flushing surrendered to his Majesty's arms.—The rapidity with which the disease has extended itself during the short period that has elapsed since that event is almost unexampled in the history of any military operations. As the season has hitherto been a favourable one, (for hot and dry weather produces the most destructive diseases); the cases have been slight, but a very considerable number of them have, notwithstanding, assumed a more serious form, and have degenerated into that species of low fever which often prevails in gaols and other ill-ventilated places in England.—A melancholy proof of this is found in the loss of valuable lives that has already been noticed, and which I am concerned to state is not diminishing. Seventeen men died in the regimental hospitals of this garrison alone during the last 24 hours.—As the progress of the mischief in the short period of three weeks is much greater than could rationally have been calculated upon, and as scarcely a third part of the sickly season has elapsed, it is hardly possible to conjecture what loss may be incurred during the continuance of it. The causes which operate on the human frame are so powerful, and so generally applied, that all the precautions and preventatives which art can invent, though they may diminish, can never obviate their effects in any great degree; it must therefore be an inevitable consequence of the British troops remaining in Walcheren, that a very considerable loss must be sustained.—Although I have trespassed so much on his lordship's time, I beg leave to add one remark, that I humbly conceive of consequence, which is, that those men who may be attacked with fever, and recover from it, will have their constitutions so affected by the shock, that their physical powers, when called

into action hereafter, will be very materially diminished. I have, &c.

JOHN WEBB,  
Inspector of Hospitals.

(Third Inclosure referred to in No. XII.)  
(Private.)

*Middleburgh, 12th Sept. 1809.*

Sir; Although the communications I have had lately with the earl of Chatham have been rather of a private than of a public nature, I consider it my duty to inform you privately of their tenor. His lordship sent for me yesterday, and having told me that the sickly state of the army in Zealand had excited much anxiety in the minds of his Majesty's ministers, he called upon me for a formal Report on the causes of the diseases which prevail, and for my opinion on the probable consequences of keeping a British force in this island during the rest of the unhealthy season. I have the honour to submit to your perusal the Report I have made; and I beg to add that I rely on your indulgence in judging of a hasty sketch, made out at a moment's notice, and in the midst of constant applications for aid to the different battalions, which are oppressed by disease, and many of them with very inadequate medical attendance. I have, &c.

JOHN WEBB, Inspector of Hospitals.

(Fourth Inclosure in No. XII.)

*Downing Street, 23d Sept. 1809.*

Sir; Lieut.-gen. sir Eyre Coote having applied for his Majesty's leave to retire from his command in the island of Walcheren, I am to suggest to you, that it seems expedient that a lieutenant general and two major generals should be appointed to the service in that island. In the event, therefore, that his Majesty shall approve the return of lieut. gen. sir Eyre Coote, I am to desire that you will lay before his Majesty the names of a lieutenant general and two major generals to command in the island of Walcheren. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

(Fifth Inclosure referred to in No. XII.)

STATEMENT of Transport Tonnage at Walcheren on the 24th September, 1809.

Troop ships	43	10,218
Cavalry ships	12	2,810
Sundry store ships	8	1,360
Ordnance stores	39	6,670
Army provisions	15	3,660
Navy ditto	13	1,773

Forage ships	5	1,350
Water ships	6	1,580
	<hr/> 141	<hr/> 29,241

Under orders for Walcheren on the 24th September, 1809.

Troop ships preparing to return for the sick.	Harwich	9	1,697
	Downs	5	1,079
	Chatham	7	1,409
	Portsmouth	19	4,008
		<hr/> 40	<hr/> 8,193

No. XIII.—DISPATCH from Viscount Castlereagh to Sir Eyre Coote, dated Downing Street, 7th Oct. 1809.

Sir; I have received your letter of the 2d instant, inclosing the report of Drs. Blane and Macgregor, and applying for some line of battle ships to be sent to Flushing to receive the sick; and in answer thereto I am to acquaint you, that previous to the receipt of your letter, instructions had been issued by his Majesty's command to the lords commissioners of the Admiralty to send to Walcheren for the reception of the sick, such line of battle ships and frigates as could be spared for that service; and I am now to acquaint you, that the ships named in the margin\* have been ordered to Flushing for the purpose doctors Blane and Macgregor recommend.—It has been stated, that in a representation made by general Monnet to his government, he had recommended, that the garrison of Walcheren should be very seldom changed; and that the sick should never be removed to another place with a view to recovery, it being found by experience, that a greater number of the sick who were kept in the island recovered there, than of those who were, with a view to their recovery, removed.—I wish you to communicate this circumstance to Dr. Blane, in order that the truth of it may be ascertained. I am, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

No. XIV.—DISPATCH from the Earl of Liverpool to Sir Eyre Coote, dated 12th Oct. 1809.

Sir: I have received and laid before the King your two letters of the 6th instant, with regard to the sick in the island of Walcheren. I have written to the Commander in Chief with regard to sending out the heavy baggage for the regiments.

\* Leyden, Isis, St. Fiorenzo, Adamant.

I am happy to find that you have recurred to the employment of the inhabitants, whom you state to have engaged to the number of 400. I am also to approve of your having appointed ten inhabitants to attend each regiment as orderlies.—I am rather at a loss for the complaint you make with regard to the officers of the barrack department which have been sent out, not having authority to order repairs or additions necessary to render the barracks habitable; as I consider you possess sufficient authority to authorize the expenditure of such sums as you may judge necessary for the purpose, these officers acting under your orders, and not under the commissioners for barracks. I am, &c,

LIVERPOOL.

No. XV.—(*Most secret and confidential*)

DISPATCH from the Earl of Liverpool to the Officer commanding his Majesty's troops in Walcheren, dated 24th Oct. 1809.

Sir; I am to desire you will lose no time in calling upon the engineer to report to you how far it is practicable to destroy the basin of Flushing, and the other naval defences of the island of Walcheren, and also to report to you for the information of his Majesty's government, in how short a space of time these objects could be severally accomplished, and what permanent effect such destruction would have on the towns and island of Walcheren.—I am likewise to desire your opinion, in the event of its being determined by his Majesty's government to evacuate the island of Walcheren, what length of time it would take at this season of the year to complete the evacuation of the island, in the two suppositions of the naval defences being destroyed, or of their being left in their present condition.—I am sure you will see the great importance of these enquiries being carried on with the utmost secrecy, so that there may be no suspicion amongst the inhabitants, or even, if possible, in the garrison, that any such objects are in contemplation, previous to the steps being taken which may be necessary to carry them into execution. I have, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

No. XVI.—(*Secret and confidential*).—DISPATCH from the Earl of Liverpool to Lieut.-General Don, dated 27th Oct. 1809.

Sir; As there still appears to prevail some uncertainty with respect to the conclusion of peace between Austria and

France, and as the expediency of the evacuation of the island of Walcheren, at the present moment, must depend in a considerable degree upon that event, I am not as yet enabled to inform you of the final determination of his Majesty's government on this important question.—There can be little doubt, however, that a very few days will bring us some decisive intelligence from the Continent on this subject, and that this intelligence will probably confirm the reports we have already received from so many quarters of the conclusion of peace.—In such an event, I think it most probable, that the decision of his Majesty's government will be, to evacuate the island of Walcheren. But under the circumstances of such an evacuation, they consider it to be an object of material consequence, to accomplish the destruction, if possible, of the basin of Flushing, as a port for men of war, as well as of the other naval resources of the island of Walcheren, provided the measures necessary for this purpose, can be executed within a reasonable time, and without rendering the evacuation of the island this winter impracticable.—I enclose to you a report on this subject; you will see by this report, the opinion entertained, of the facility of attaining the object, and you will communicate it to the admiral, and to the commanding officer of engineers in strict confidence.—If the destruction of the naval resources, above stated, should be considered by you as practicable, I am particularly anxious to call your attention to the situation of the garrison; whilst this operation is going on measures have been already taken, and are still in progress, to remove, with as little delay as possible, all the sick, and others who may be unfit for service, from the island. The reduced state of the garrison, from these circumstances, would render it impossible to look to the retention of the island during the winter, without the necessity of sending some reinforcements from this country. But if during the temporary occupation of the island for the purposes above mentioned such a measure could be avoided, it would certainly on many accounts be desirable.—As this, however, ought to depend on your decision, founded upon your knowledge of the actual situation of the island, and of the means which the enemy possess at this time of making an attack upon it, directions will be immediately given to hold a corps of four or five thousand in-

fantry in readiness on the coast, in order that they may be sent without delay to Walcheren, in case you should judge it necessary to call for them.—You will consider in your decision on this question, the advantages which may be expected to arise from such a reinforcement, compared with the inconveniencies which may result from the necessity of embarking an additional number of troops, when the evacuation of the island is finally to take place.—You will inform me of your opinion on this point with as little delay as possible; and you will take every preparatory step, in conjunction with the navy, which may be necessary for leaving the island in such a condition as, without inflicting any wanton injury on the inhabitants, may render its ports and arsenals at least for a time unserviceable; and thereby prevent the enemy from deriving those advantages which they have certainly hitherto derived from thence, since they have had the command of the navigation of the Scheldt. I am, &c. LIVERPOOL.

No. XVII. — (*Secret.*)—DISPATCH from *Lieut.-Col. Bunbury to Lieut. General Don, dated 4th Nov. 1809.*

Sir; I am directed by lord Liverpool to acquaint you, that in consequence of the representation contained in your dispatch of the 27th ult. the most pressing directions have been given for sending transports to Walcheren, for the reception of the sick, in as large a proportion and with as little delay as possible.—Thirteen transports, the capacity of which amounts to 2,953 tons, are now lying at Harwich in perfect readiness to sail for Flushing as soon as the wind may be favourable; and a fleet of thirty sail that arrived yesterday in the Downs with sick men from Walcheren, will be cleared and prepared to return with all possible expedition. Lord Liverpool takes this opportunity of recommending to your attention the apparent expediency of directing, that, whatever laden transports there may be now lying at Flushing, the cargoes of which are not likely to be required under the circumstances in contemplation, should be sent by the earliest opportunity to England, in order that they may be cleared and rendered applicable to the other services for which they may probably be required. I am, &c.

HENRY EDWARD BUNBURY.

VOL. XV.—*Appendix.*

No. XVIII.—(*Secret.*)—DISPATCH from the *Earl of Liverpool to Lieut. General Don, dated 4th Nov. 1809.*

Sir; Your dispatch of the 29th ult., with its inclosures, has been received and laid before the King.—You will have received some days ago, my letter of the 27th ult., with the inclosed report on the subject of the destruction of the basin of Flushing, and of the other naval defences of the island of Walcheren, to which I directed your particular attention.—It being now determined to evacuate the island of Walcheren, unless some new circumstances should occur in the progress of the operation which might render an alteration in this decision expedient, and the report of col. Pilkington, on the subject of the destruction of the basin of Flushing, &c. having been fully considered by his Majesty's government, I have received his Majesty's commands, to direct that the basin of Flushing, and all such coast defences of the island of Walcheren, as col. Pilkington states in his report, could be "effectually destroyed in two days, without hazarding an inundation of the island," should be destroyed in such time and manner as may be necessary for that purpose; and I am to desire that you will, at the same time, call upon col. Pilkington, to report in what degree the destruction of the sea lines of Flushing, as stated in his letter to you, would further prevent the enemy's fleet from having the advantage of Flushing as a naval station; whether such destruction would materially obstruct or retard the re-establishment of the basin, and what would be the additional extent of the mischief which would occur thereby, to the island and its inhabitants.—It will not be necessary to delay the execution of the first part of these operations till the report shall have been received upon the latter points, to which I have just referred.—With respect to the particular moment at which the operations should commence, you are authorized, in case you should be of opinion that the commencement of them would give alarm to the inhabitants, and might invite attack from the enemy, before the whole or the greater part of the sick are embarked, to defer the actual commencement of the work as late as it can safely be deferred, making in the mean time all the necessary preparations and arrangements for it, and leaving sufficient time to

(B)

complete it during the period which will be occupied in effecting the embarkation of the stores and the final evacuation of the garrison.—I have given the most positive orders, in consequence of your dispatch of 27th ult. that no time should be lost in sending out all the transports that can be prepared for the purpose of embarking the remainder of the sick.

I am, &c. LIVERPOOL.

No. XIX.—(*Secret.*)—DISPATCH from the Earl of Liverpool to Lieut. General Don, dated 9th Nov. 1809.

Sir; Your dispatches of the 3rd and 4th inst. have been received and laid before the King.—As the determination to evacuate the island of Walcheren has been taken, it cannot be necessary for me to enter into any of the particulars stated in your dispatch, respecting the best means of providing for the permanent defence of the island, in case it had been thought expedient to retain it.—I have great satisfaction however in informing you that the diligence and attention with which you have so early examined this part of the subject has met with his Majesty's most gracious approbation.—With respect to the destruction of the bason of Flushing, and the other naval defences of the island, no time need be lost in commencing the operations for this purpose, as soon as they can be undertaken consistently with the security of the sick.—The great object his Majesty's government have in view is, that this operation should be effectual, and that the works should not be left in such a condition that the French ruler, with the unlimited command of military labour which he possesses, may be able to re-establish them in a short space of time. How far it may be expedient to have recourse to inundation to any considerable extent for this object, I will inform you more particularly when I have received answers to the questions put through you, to the commanding engineer in my dispatch of the 4th inst. I can have no difficulty, however, in authorising you to inundate any part of the island which may be necessary for the security of the forces under your command in the event of an attack from the enemy.—Between 4 and 5000 tons of transports sailed from Harwich and the Downs on the 5th inst. for the accommodation of the sick. An equal number are preparing and will sail without delay. I should hope that this amount of tonnage would enable you in the course

of ten days or a fortnight to clear the island of all the sick, and even of the worst cases among the convalescents.—The 1800 men which were in the Sussex district are embarking. They will receive orders to come round to the Downs, and they may then proceed on to Walcheren, or disembark, according to the information we shall at that time receive from you.

I am, &c. LIVERPOOL.

No. XX.—(*Secret.*)—DISPATCH from Lieut. Col Bunbury, to Lieut. General Don, dated 9th Nov. 1809.

I am directed by lord Liverpool, to acquaint you that as he is apprehensive from the reduced state of your force, you may not have adequate means to accomplish the demolition of the bason of Flushing, with the desired promptitude, he has judged it expedient to order that sixty civil artificers used to labour on canals and docks, should be immediately sent to Flushing, and placed at your disposal, and under the orders of the commanding engineer. These men, under the direction of Mr. William Bough, will embark to-morrow morning, on board the Eleanor transport, in which vessel will also be embarked certain tools which Mr. Kennie represented as being necessary for the work in contemplation, and which will be consigned by the ordnance to the commanding royal engineer in Walcheren.—A second division of civil artificers, (about forty in number) will be sent over, to aid in the same object early in the ensuing week; but hitherto no communication has been made, either to the overseers or the men, as to the work upon which they are to be employed.

No. XXI.—DISPATCH from the Earl of Liverpool to Lieut. General Don, dated 13th Nov. 1809.

Sir; Your dispatches of the 7th inst. have been received and laid before the King.—I am now to signify to you his Majesty's command that you evacuate the island of Walcheren, with the forces under your command; but I am at the same time to inform you, that it is the determination of his Majesty that previously to the evacuation you should take such measures as you may judge most effectual for the destruction of the bason of Flushing, and of the naval defences of the island.—You will adopt for this purpose the plan first suggested by lieutenant-col. Pilkington, by which the island will

be exposed to the consequences of inundation in as small a degree as can be consistent with the effectual execution of the service.—It is to be regretted that lieutenant. Pilkington did not, in his second report, explain with more particularity the manner in which he intended to conduct this operation. It does not appear whether the suggestion contained in the report transmitted to you in my letter of the 27th October of destroying the sills of the flood-gates and the jetties, and of obstructing the channel into the bason, form a part of his plan. To this operation it may be proper therefore that lieutenant. col. Pilkington's attention should be directed.—As the greatest importance is attached to a service by which the re-establishment of Flushing as a naval station and dépôt of the enemy may be most effectual retarded and obstructed for the longest period, I have felt it to be my duty to bring under your consideration every suggestion, and to afford every assistance which can render the operation as complete as possible.—I inclose a paper, containing the amount of tonnage which it will be in the power of the transport board now to provide for the embarkation of the troops, and of stores of all descriptions. The admiralty will, I trust, be able, by means of ships of war, to afford some accommodation to the healthy and effective part of the garrison.—As the season of the year is so far advanced, I have no doubt you will see the importance of making every necessary exertion to bring this service to a conclusion within a reasonable time.—I have, &c. LIVERPOOL.

(Inclosure referred to in No. 21.)

## STATEMENT.

	Vessels.	Tons.
Sailed from Harwich and the Downs, 5th November .....	18	3,965
Ready to sail from various Ports when the wind permits .....	23	7,261
Preparing with all expedition, and will sail successively as the wind permits	68	20,179
Ditto, intended for Crews of Gun Boats, but may be applied for the use of the troops .....	4	1,278
Having on board 1,800 Infantry to lie in the Downs, but applicable if required	8	2,343
	121	35,026

N. B. Exclusive of the above, cavalry transports, calculated for the conveyance of 500 horses, will be ready in a few days to sail from Portsmouth.

No. XXII.—RETURN of empty Troop Ships sent to Walcheren between 4th Sept. and 11th October 1809.

5th Sept. Downs	659	} With double allowance of medical comforts.
12th Do. Do.	2,831	
14th Do. Do.	578	
12th Do. Harwich	6,000	
24th Do. Do.	1,540	
28th Do. Do.	1,895	
	13,512	

The above Return is conformable to the books of this office.

R. GEORGE.—A. SERLE.—S. DOUGLAS.  
Transport Office, 30th Jan. 1810.

No. XXIII.—RETURN of empty Troop Ships sent to Walcheren subsequently to 11th October 1809.

	No. of Tons.
19th Oct. .... Downs .....	3,700
31st. .... Harwich .....	3,100
5th Nov. .... Downs .....	832
18th .... Harwich .....	2,717
20th .... Downs .....	5,725
..... Nore .....	1,047
21st .... Ditto .....	3,095
22d .... Downs .....	756
29th .... Ditto .....	1,940
30th .... Nore .....	1,276
3d Dec. .... Ditto .....	1,073
	25,261

The above Return is conformable to the books of this office.

R. GEORGE.—A. SERLE.—S. DOUGLAS.  
Transport Office, 30th Jan. 1810.

No. XXIV.—RETURN of the Sick and Wounded sent to England from Walcheren at different times.

21st Aug. .... Ter Veere .....	200
9th Sept. .... ditto .....	75
16th .... Ramekins .....	75
18th .... Ter Veere .....	334
5th Oct. .... Flushing .....	971
9th .... ditto .....	802
10th .... ditto .....	738
21st .... Ter Veere .....	397
22d .... Flushing .....	1,001
28th .... ditto .....	170

30th .....	ditto .....	705
31st .....	ditto .....	681
.....	ditto .....	250
.....	Ter Vere .....	111
11th Nov. ....	ditto .....	761
.....	Flushing .....	369
14th .....	ditto .....	520
15th .....	ditto .....	336
17th .....	ditto .....	600
23d .....	ditto .....	1,173
26th .....	ditto .....	680
28th .....	ditto .....	144
1st Dec. ....	ditto .....	149
14th .....	ditto .....	184
16th .....	ditto .....	48
31st Aug. } .....	South Beveland	1,389
4th Sept. }		
Total		12,863

No. XXV.—EXTRACT of a *Dispatch from Mr. Bathurst to Mr. Secretary Canning, dated Buda, 15th Sept. 1809.*

The emperor is very solicitous that the British forces disembarked in Holland should continue their operations in that country, from a conviction, that the action of his Majesty's troops on that point, will afford to Austria a more efficacious relief, than a diversion on any other sphere that might be selected.—His imperial Majesty appears to entertain this idea, from a notion that the inhabitants of Holland and the Low Countries are so ill disposed towards the government of Buonaparte, as to encourage a hope of their joining the English cause.

### B.

FROM THE EARL OF CHATHAM.

No. I.—DISPATCH from the *Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 2d Aug. 1809.—Received 6th August.*

*Head Quarters, Middlebourg,  
2d Aug. 1809.*

My lord; I have the honour of acquainting your lordship, that having sailed from the Downs early in the morning of the 28th ult. with rear admiral sir R. Strachan, in his Majesty's ship *Venerable*, we arrived the same evening and anchored in East Capelle Roads, and were joined on the following morning by the division of the army under lieutenant general sir John Hope. It blew in the course of that day a fresh gale from the westward, which created a heavy swell, and the

small craft being much exposed, it was determined to seek shelter for them in the anchorage of the Room-pot, where lieutenant general sir John Hope's division was also directed to proceed, in order to possess such points as might be necessary to secure the anchorage, as well as with a view to future operations up the Scheldt.—The left wing of the army under lieutenant general sir Eyre Coote, particularly designed for the operations against Walcheren, arrived on the 29th, and morning of the 30th, but the wind continuing to blow fresh from the westward, and occasioning a great surf on the beach, both on the side of Zoutland, as well as near Domburg, it became expedient, in order to effect a landing, to carry the whole fleet through the narrow and difficult passage into the Vere Gat, hitherto considered impracticable for large ships; which being successfully accomplished, and the necessary preparations for debarkation being completed, I have the satisfaction of acquainting your lordship that the troops landed on the Bree Sand, about a mile to the westward of Fort de Haak, without opposition, when a position was taken up for the night on the Sand Hill, with East Capelle in front. Lieutenant general Fraser was detached immediately to the left against Fort der Haak and Ter Vere, the former of which on his approach was evacuated by the enemy, but the town of Vere, which was strong in its defences, and had a garrison of about 600 men, held out till yesterday morning notwithstanding the heavy and well directed fire of the bomb vessels and gun boats during the preceding day, and until the place was closely invested.—Early on the morning of the 31st, a deputation from Middlebourg, from whence the garrison had been withdrawn into Flushing, having arrived in camp, terms of capitulation were agreed upon, copies of which I have the honour herewith to enclose, as well as that of the garrison of Ter Vere, and the divisions of the army under the orders of lieutenant general lord Paget and major general Graham moved forward, and took up a position with the right to Maliskirke, the centre at Gryperskirke, and left at St. Lawrence.—On the morning of the 1st inst. the troops advanced to the investment of Flushing, which operation was warmly contested with the enemy. In this movement he was driven by major general Graham's division, on the right from the batteries of Dyckshock, the Vygeter, and the Noll, while brigada-

dier general Houston's brigade forced the enemy posted on the road from Mid-delbourg to retire with the loss of four guns, and many killed and wounded. Lieut. gen. lord Paget's division also drove in the post of the enemy, and took up his position at West Zouburg. Nothing could exceed the gallantry of the troops throughout the whole of this day, and my warmest praise is due to the several general officers for their judicious disposition in the advancement of their respective columns. To lieut. gen. sir Eyre Coote I feel much indebted for his exertions in this service, and the prompt and able manner in which he has executed my orders. The light troops under brig. gen. baron Rottenburg have been admirably conducted, and with the officers commanding the several corps engaged, I have every reason to be most perfectly satisfied. The 3d battalion of the royal and flank companies of the 6th regiment, maintained the right under difficult circumstances, with great gallantry, and killed and wounded a great many of the enemy.—Ter Vere being in our possession, lieut. gen. Fraser's division marched in the evening upon Ruttern, detaching a corps for the reduction of Ram-makins, which when effected will complete the investment of Flushing.—I have to regret the temporary absence of brig. gen. Browne, who was wounded late in the day, but I trust not to be long deprived of his services.—I have the honour to enclose a return of the killed, wounded, and missing. Deeply as the fall of every British soldier is at all times to be lamented, the loss will not appear to have been great, when the serious impediments it was in the power of the enemy to oppose to our progress are considered, as well as the formidable state of the batteries of Flushing, to which the troops were necessarily exposed.—The pressure of circumstances has prevented the commanding officer of artillery from furnishing a detailed account of the guns and ordnance stores taken in the several batteries and fortress of Ter Vere, but which will be hereafter transmitted, with a return of the prisoners taken since our landing, supposed to amount to 1,000. Commodore Owen's squadron, with lieut. gen. the marquis of Huntley's division, remains at anchor in the Weeling passage; and the divisions of lieut. gen. earl of Rosslyn, and lieut. gen. Grosvenor, are arrived at the anchorage in the Vere Gat.—I cannot

conclude without expressing in the strongest terms, my admiration of the distinguished abilities with which the fleet was conducted through the passage into the Vere Gat, nor can the advantages resulting from the success of this operation be too highly estimated; as by it we are not only enabled to effect a disembarkation, which in the then state of the wind was impracticable in any other quarter; but also, that the enemy, probably relying on the difficulties of the navigation, was less prepared for resistance. I must also warmly acknowledge the great assistance the service has derived from the zealous exertions of the officers of the navy, and of the seamen employed in drawing a considerable proportion of the artillery through a heavy sand, and without whose aid the advance of the army must necessarily have been suspended, the strength of the tide rendering the landing of the horses for a time extremely difficult. I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

P. S. Since writing the above letter, I have received intelligence from sir John Hope, that the reserve of the army had effected their landing on South Beveland, and that a detachment had occupied the town of Goes.

CHATHAM.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. I.)

ARTICLES of Capitulation entered into for the surrender of the Town of Mid-dleburgh to his Britannic Majesty's forces, in consequence of a deputation from the Prefect and Burgomasters for that purpose.

Art. 1. Security to be granted to every person, public functionaries, private persons, citizens, and inhabitants, whatever their political opinions may have been or now are.—*Ans.* Granted, provided they conduct themselves as peaceful citizens, and conform to such regulations as will be hereafter established by the authority of the British government.

Art. 2. Protection to all property without exception whatsoever.—*Ans.* Granted, as far as relates to private property. All public property is to be accounted for to such commissioners as will be named by the general commanding his Britannic Majesty's forces.

Art. 3. The armed citizens or other inhabitants who may have taken up arms, or done military duty to maintain public tranquillity, to be protected in their persons and property, and permitted to return to their dwellings.—*Ans.* Granted,



upon condition that their arms are given to such persons as will be duly authorized to receive them.

Art. 4. Public Functionaries and their families to be permitted, if they desire it, to return to any other part of the kingdom of Holland.

Art. 5. Inhabitants who are absent from their houses, to be permitted to return with their property.—*Answ.* Granted, subject to the restriction specified in the first article.

Art. 6. The troops to be quartered in barracks.—*Answ.* This must be determined according to circumstances, but every care will be taken to render the quartering as little burdensome to the inhabitants as possible.

Art. 7. Should any misunderstanding take place relating to the foregoing articles they will be explained in favour of the town and inhabitants.—*Answ.* Granted.

Art. 8. The above Article to be also extended to all parts of this department which may not have obtained equally favourable terms.—*Ans.* This Article to apply in the present instance to the town of Middleburgh alone: but no difficulty will be made to grant the same advantageous terms to any town that will surrender in like manner without opposition.

Additional Article. All military sick in hospital, to remain where they are at present, and to be taken care of; on recovery, to be permitted to return to their corps.—*Answ.* The sick are to be taken care of by their own medical people, but must be considered as prisoners of war.

(Signed) C. G. BEDLEFIELD.

P. G. SCHORER.

J. M. VANKHOOR.

H. VAN DE MERDENE.

Agreed to by me, conformably to the powers vested in me by lieut. gen. the earl of Chatham, K. G. Commander of his Britannic Majesty's forces. (Signed)

EYRE COOTE, Lieut. Gen.

*Heights of Bree Sand, July 31, 1809.*

(Second Inclosure referred to in No. I.)

PROPOSAL of a Capitulation, by the Commandant of the Fortress of Veer, to his excellency Lieutenant General M. Fraser, commanding the besieging army before Veer, and to captain Richardson, the senior Naval Officer on shore.

Art. 1. The garrison of Veer shall be allowed to quit one of the gates of the town with all the honours of war, and

ground their arms upon the glacis, and they shall not be allowed to serve against his Britannic Majesty or his allies, until they have been regularly exchanged, and the troops shall be sent to some Dutch place in Holland, at the expence of his Majesty. The officers shall keep their swords, horses, and property, and the soldiers their knapsacks.—*Answ.* Agreed to, excepting that the garrison is to be considered generally as prisoners of war, and shall be disposed of as the British government shall think proper, and as is customary on such occasions.

Art. 2. From this moment until the evacuation of the fortress, the troops of both armies shall remain in their present position.—*Answ.* Granted.

Art. 3. All hostilities shall cease from both sides, and no preparation of attack or defence shall be carried on.—*Answ.* Granted.

Art. 4. All the artillery and stores shall be delivered over by the commissaries appointed from both sides.—*Answ.* Agreed to, considering that in this Article the surrender of public property of all descriptions is included.

Art. 5. All the sick and wounded shall be left to the humanity of the General until their recovery.—*Answ.* Granted.

Art. 6. The inhabitants of the town of Veer shall continue to enjoy all their privileges, and their particular property shall be respected, and shall, if they choose, be allowed to leave the place. This privilege shall likewise be granted to all the women of the garrison.—*Answ.* Granted.

(Signed) A. M. FRASER, Lieut. Gen. commanding the troops before Veer.

CHAS. RICHARDSON, Senior Naval Officer.

V. BOGART, Commandant of the garrison of Veer.

T. CAREY, Lieut. Col. Military Secretary.

*Veer, Aug. 1st, 1809.*

No. II.—DISPATCH from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 3d August 1809—Received 6th August.

*Middleburgh, 3d Aug. 1809.*

My Lord; Since my letter of yesterday's date, I have received intelligence from lieut. gen. sir John Hope of his having occupied Batz, and taken possession of the whole island of South Beveland. I have also the satisfaction to acquaint your lordship, that upon the batteries being

prepared to open, the fortress of Rammakins surrendered this evening; and I have the honour to inclose the Articles of Capitulation. I have, &c. CHATHAM.

(Inclosure referred to in No. II.)

TERMS of Capitulation of the fortress of Rammakins, 3d August 1809.

Art. 1. The garrison surrenders prisoners of war, with every thing that belongs to the fortress, whether ammunition, cannon, or government stores belonging to the French and Dutch, of every sort and kind.

Art. 2. The garrison will lay down their arms this moment; and are to be disposed of as the British government chooses, and as has been the custom of war.

Art. 3. The officers will be allowed to keep their swords, and will, with their soldiers, be permitted to keep their private baggage.

(Signed)

ALEX. M. FRASER, lieut. gen.  
commanding his Britannic  
Majesty's troops before Ram-  
makins.

WOUNIER, Capt. Commandant.  
T. CAREY, Lieut.-Col. Mil. Sec.

Strength of the garrison. 2 captains, 1 lieutenant, 4 sergeants, 7 corporals, 2 drummers, 111 privates. Total 127.

No. III.—DISPATCH from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 7th August 1809.—Received 11th August.

Head-quarters, Middleburgh, Aug. 7, 1809.

My Lord; nothing very material has occurred since my last dispatch of the 3d inst. We have been unremittingly employed in bringing up the artillery of siege, ammunition and stores to the vicinity of Flushing, and the troops have been occupied in the construction of the batteries, and in carrying on the several works before the place, but which have been necessarily interrupted by the very heavy rains which have fallen here.—The enemy is active and enterprising, and the garrison has certainly received considerable reinforcements from the opposite coast, nor has it been in the power of our flotilla hitherto to prevent it. Under these circumstances it has been found necessary to land lieut. gen. Grosvenor's division, and the two battalions of the King's German Legion have been also for the present brought on shore.—Immediately on the fall of Rammakins I determined, as

soon as the necessary arrangements were made, to pass the infantry of lieut.-general the earl of Rosslyn's corps, together with lieut. gen. the marquis of Huntley's division, and the brigades of artillery, into South Beveland, to form a junction with a reserve under lieut. gen. sir John Hope; and that the cavalry and ordnance ships, together with the transports of lieut. gen. Grosvenor's division the moment their services could be spared from before Flushing, should be brought through the Slow passage, and proceed up the West Scheldt: but of course this latter operation cannot take place until a sufficient naval force shall have been enabled to enter the river, and to proceed in advance; but the very severe blowing weather we have constantly experienced, added to the great difficulty of the navigation, has hitherto baffled all their efforts.—By letters from lieut. gen. sir John Hope, I find that the enemy had on the 5th instant come down with about 28 gun vessels before Batz, on which place they kept up a smart cannonade for some hours, but were forced to retire by the guns from the fort, and every thing has since remained quiet in that quarter. I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

No. IV.—DISPATCH from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 8th August 1809.—Received 11th August.

Middleburgh, 8th August 1809.

My Lord; since closing my dispatch of yesterday's date, the enemy, towards five o'clock in the evening, in considerable force, made a vigorous sortie upon the right of our line, occupied by major general Graham's division. The attack was principally directed against our advanced picquets, who were supported by the third battalion of the Royals, the 5th and 38th regiments, under colonel Hay. These corps, together with detachments of the royal artillery, the 95th and light battalions of the King's German Legion, received the enemy with their accustomed intrepidity, and, after a sharp contest of some duration, forced him to retire, with a very considerable loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners.—In this affair the enemy has had another opportunity of witnessing the superior gallantry of British troops: in no instance has he succeeded in making the least impression throughout our line, and on this occasion, so far from profiting by his attempt, he has been obliged to re-

linquish some very advantageous ground, where our advanced posts are now established.—I cannot too strongly express my sense of the unremitting vigilance and ability manifested by major general Graham, in securing and maintaining his post against the repeated attacks of the enemy to dislodge him; and I have great satisfaction in acquainting your lordship, that the major general mentions, in terms of the warmest approbation, the distinguished conduct and gallantry of the officers and troops engaged on this occasion.—I am now enabled to transmit, for your lordship's information, an abstract return of the ordnance, ammunition, and stores, that have fallen into our hands since our arrival in this island. I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

No. V.—DISPATCH from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 11th Aug. 1809.—Received 15th August.

*Head Quarters, Middleburg,  
11th August 1809.*

My lord; I received yesterday evening your lordship's dispatch of the 8th instant by the messenger Mills, and I must entreat your lordship to offer my most dutiful acknowledgements to his Majesty for the gracious approbation he has been pleased to express of my humble endeavours; and I shall feel the greatest satisfaction in communicating to lieutenant-general sir Eyre Coote, and the general and other officers and troops employed here under my command, the sense which his Majesty entertains of their meritorious conduct in the service in which they have been engaged, as well as the confidence his Majesty feels in their future good conduct, and which I trust they will not disappoint.—The enemy has continued to give what interruption he could to the progress of our works, but since the date of my last letter he has attempted no sortie in any force. He has endeavoured to cause us some embarrassment by opening the sluices at Flushing, and letting in the salt water; but this has been attended as yet with little inconvenience; as the necessary precautions for letting off the water through the sluices in our possession at this place, and at Veer, have been taken, and I have no doubt will be found effectual. The several batteries will, I hope, be ready to open on that place either to-morrow, or the following day, and I shall look with great anxiety to the result, as the speedy reduction of Flushing,

particularly under present appearances, is of the last importance; as, till then, so very large a portion of the force of the command is unavoidably detained before it.—The diversion of lieutenant-general lord Rosslyn, and lieutenant-general lord Huntley, were, according to the intention I mentioned in my last letter, landed on South Beveland on the morning of the 9th inst.; but I am sorry to say, that the division of transports, with the cavalry and artillery horses, the heavy ordnance, and stores of all descriptions, have not yet been brought through the Slowe passage: The moment they appear, it is my intention to proceed towards Bathz; but, as till then no operations can be undertaken, I have thought my presence here was more useful.—A large portion of the flotilla has proceeded up the river to Bathz, on which place I learn that the enemy had again made an attack, but had been repulsed by the guns of the fort. I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

No. VI.—DISPATCH from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 16th Aug. 1809.—Received 19th August.

*Head Quarters, Middleburg,  
16th August 1809.*

My lord; I have the honour of acquainting your lordship, that on the 13th inst. the batteries before Flushing being completed (and the frigates, bombs, and gun vessels, having at the same time taken their stations) a fire was opened at about half past one P. M. from 52 pieces of heavy ordnance, which was vigorously returned by the enemy. An additional battery of six 24 pounders was completed the same night, and the whole continued to play upon the town with little or no intermission till late on the following day.—On the morning of the 14th inst., about 10 o'clock, the line of battle ships at anchor in the Duerloo passage, led by rear admiral sir Richard Strachan, got under weigh, and ranging up along the sea line of defence, kept up, as they passed, a tremendous cannonade on the town for several hours with the greatest gallantry and effect. About four in the afternoon, perceiving that the fire of the enemy had entirely ceased, and the town presenting a most awful scene of destruction, being on fire in almost every quarter, I directed lieutenant-general sir Eyre Coote, to send in to summons the place. Gen. Monnet returned for answer that he would reply to the summons as soon as he had consulted a council of war. An hour had been allow-

ed him for the purpose; but a considerable time beyond it having elapsed without any answer being received, hostilities were ordered to be recommenced with the utmost vigour, and about 11 o'clock at night, one of the enemy's batteries advanced upon the sea dyke, in front of lieutenant-general Frazer's position, was most gallantly carried—at the point of the bayonet by detachments from the 36th, 71st, light battalions of the King's German Legion, under lieutenant-colonel Pack, opposed to great superiority of numbers. They took 40 prisoners, and killed and wounded a great many of the enemy.—I must not omit to mention that, on the preceding evening, an intrenchment in front of major-general Graham's position was also forced in a manner equally undaunted by the 14th regiment and detachments of the King's German Legion under lieutenant-colonel Nichols, who drove the enemy from it, and made a lodgement within musquet shot of the town, taking one gun and 30 prisoners.—About two in the morning the enemy demanded a suspension of arms for 48 hours, which was refused, and only two hours granted, when he agreed to surrender according to the summons sent in on the basis of the garrison becoming prisoners of war.—I have now the satisfaction of acquainting your lordship, that, these preliminaries being acceded to, as soon as the admiral landed in the morning, colonel Long, adjutant-general, and captain Cockburn of the royal navy, were appointed to negotiate the further Articles of Capitulation, which I have now the honour to inclose. They were ratified about 3 this morning, when detachments of the Royals on the right and of his Majesty's 71st regiment on the left, took possession of the gates of the town; the garrison will march out to-morrow, and will be embarked as speedily as possible.—I may now congratulate your lordship on the fall of a place so indispensably necessary to our future operations, as so large a proportion of our force being required to carry on the siege with that degree of vigour and dispatch which the means of defence the enemy possessed, and particularly his power of inundation (which was rapidly spreading to an alarming extent), rendered absolutely necessary.—Having hoped, had circumstances permitted, to have proceeded up the river at an earlier period, I had committed to lieutenant-general sir Eyre Coote, the direction of the detail of the siege and of the operations before Flushing; and I cannot suffi-

ciently express my sense of the unremitting zeal and exertion with which he has conducted the arduous service entrusted to him, in which he was ably assisted by lieutenant-colonels Walsh and Offenev, attached to him as assistants in the adjutant and quarter-master-general's department.—I have every reason to be satisfied with the judicious manner in which the general officers have directed the several operations, as well as with the spirit and intelligence manifested by the commanding officers of corps, and the zeal and ardour of all ranks of officers.—It is with great pleasure I can report the uniform good conduct of the troops, who have not only, on all occasions, shewn the greatest intrepidity in the presence of the enemy, but have supported with great patience and cheerfulness the laborious duties they have had to perform.—The active and persevering exertions of the corps of royal engineers have been conducted with much skill and judgment by colonel Fyers, aided by lieutenant-colonel D'Arcy; and it is impossible for me to do sufficient justice to the distinguished conduct of the officers and men of the royal artillery under the able direction and animating example of brigadier-general M'Leod.—The seamen, whose labours had already been so useful to the army, sought their reward in a further opportunity of distinguishing themselves; and one of the batteries was accordingly entrusted to them, and which they served with admirable vigour and effect.—I must here beg to express my strong sense of the constant and cordial co-operation of the navy on all occasions; and my warmest acknowledgments are most particularly due to captain Cockburn, of the *Belaisle*, commanding the flotilla, and to captain Richardson, of the *Cæsar*, commanding the brigade of seamen landed with the army.—I have the honour to inclose a return of the garrison of Flushing, in addition to which I have learnt that, besides the number killed, which was considerable, upwards of 1,000 wounded men were transported to Cadsand, previous to the complete investment of the town.—I also subjoin a statement of deserters and prisoners exclusive of the garrison of Flushing.—This dispatch will be delivered to your lordship by my first aid de camp, major Bradford, who is fully qualified to give your lordship every further information, and whom I beg earnestly to recommend to his Majesty's protection. I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. VI.)

His excellency the general of division Monet, one of the commandants of the legion of honour, commandant in chief of the fortress of Flushing, having authorized M. L'Eveque, capt. of the imperial engineers, and M. Montonnet, capt. of the imperial artillery, to treat of terms of capitulation for the surrender of the town of Flushing to the troops of his Britannic Majesty; and their excellencies lieut. gen. the earl of Chatham, K. G. and rear-admiral Sir Richard Strachan, K. B. commanding in chief the military and naval forces before Flushing, having authorised capt. Cockburn of his Majesty's ship *Belaisle*, commanding the British flotilla, and col. Long, adjutant-general, to treat conjointly with the said Commissioners thereon, after duly exchanging their respective powers, agreed to the following Articles; viz.

Art. 1. La garnison de Flessingue sera prisonnière de guerre. Elle sortira de la place avec tous les honneurs de la guerre; déposera les armes sur la quai de la porte d'eau: sera renvoyé en France sur parole, et ne pourra, pendant un an, porter les armes contre sa Majesté Britannique ou les alliés qu'elle peut avoir au moment de la capitulation.—Cet Article est applicable aux officiers de marine qui se trouvent actuellement dans la place de Flessingue.—*Ans.* The garrison of Flushing will be permitted to march out of the town with the honours of war required, and they will lay down their arms on the glacis, but must be considered as prisoners of war, and sent as such to England.—The officers of marine will share the fate of the rest of the garrison.

Art. 2. Les officiers généraux d'état major, de la marine, et des corps qui composent la garnison conserveront leurs armes, leurs chevaux, & tous les effets qui leur appartiennent.—Les sous officiers, soldats, marines, et domestiques des officiers conserveront leurs havre-sacs.—*Ans.* Granted.

Art. 3. Les malades et les blessés susceptibles d'être évacués seront transférés en France; les autres malades seront abandonnés aux soins et à l'loyauté de M. Le Gen. commandant les troupes de S. M. Britannique et évacués sur le territoire François aussitôt que leur état le permettra.—Il sera laissé un nombre suffisant d'officiers de santé pour le traitement de ces

malades. Les officiers de santé recevront les mêmes emoluments que ceux de sa Majesté Britannique.—*Ans.* The sick and wounded must be considered as prisoners of war; such as are in a state to be removed shall be embarked with the garrison; the rest will remain under the care of French physicians and surgeons until sufficiently recovered to admit of their being removed.—The physicians and surgeons will receive the allowance usually granted to prisoners of war of their rank and description, together with such further remuneration for their attendance on the sick, as the general commanding the British army may be pleased to grant.

Art. 4. Les non-combattans, tels que les sous inspecteurs aux révues, le commissaire de guerre, les officiers de santé, le préposés des différents services administratifs, ne seront point considérés comme prisonniers de guerre. Ils pourront disposer de leurs effets et propriétés et les emporter en France, ainsi que toutes les pièces relatives à leur comptabilité pour justifier de leurs gestions aux gouvernements Français.—*Ans.* The officers and others mentioned in this Article, all attendants on the French army; and in short Frenchmen of every description, not inhabitants of Flushing previous to the year 1807, will be sent to England, and hereafter treated according to such arrangements as may take place between the two governments respecting non-combatants. Their private property and personal property shall be respected, and permission will be given them to retain all such papers as specially relate to and may be necessary for the settlement of their accounts. All Frenchmen and others who may be permitted to remain will be expected to take the oath of allegiance to his Britannic Majesty when required, and conform to all laws and regulations which may hereafter be made by the British government.

Art. 5. S'il n'a été fait aucune stipulation particulière concernant les malades laissés à Middelbourg aux officiers de santé aux employés du dit Hôpital, ils seront traités d'après les Articles trois et quatre de la présente Capitulation.—*Ans.* Granted, conformably to the answers given to the 3rd and 4th Articles.

Art. 6. Les propriétés des habitans seront respectées; il sera libre aux dits habitans de se retirer en France avec leurs propriétés particulières; leur sera accordé toute sûreté à cet égard; ils ne pourront en au-

cune manière être inquiètes pour leurs opinions et la conduite qu'ils ont tenue pendant le siège.—*Ans.* The property of the inhabitants, of every description, will be respected, it being understood that all naval and military stores will be held in requisition, until proved to be private property of individuals, and the British government shall in that case be at liberty to make use of the same, on paying a just remuneration, to the proprietors. Such inhabitants as may be desirous of returning to France, and shall notify this their intention within eight days after the ratification of this capitulation, shall be permitted to do so at a period to be determined by the British commander in chief; and no inhabitant shall be molested on account of any opinion or conduct he may hitherto have held.

Art. 7. Il sera accordé par les commissaires Anglois et aux Frais de leur gouvernement les Voitures & les Batteaux nécessaires pour transporter de la place sur la territoire Française les malades et les baggages et effets des officiers : ces effets ne pourront être visités, il leur sera accordé toute sureté pendant le passage.—*Ans.* Every expence of transporting the French garrison, sick, &c. with their baggage to England, will of course be defrayed by the British government.

Art. 8. S'il survenoit quelque difficulté dans l'interpretation d'un des articles ci dessus, elle sera levée par les commissaires soussignés, et autant que possible à l'avantage de la garnison.—*Ans.* Granted.

Given under our hands in Flushing this 15th day of August 1809.

(Signed) GEO. COCKBURN, Captain H. M. S. Belleisle, commanding the British Flotilla.

ROB. LONG, Col. Adjutant-General.

F. MONTONNET, Capitaine d'Artillerie.

P. LEVEQUE, Capitaine Commandant du Genie.

#### ADDITIONAL ARTICLES.

Art. 1. The undersigned commissioners have agreed that all ordnance, military and naval stores of every description, as well as all maps, charts, plans, and military memoirs, &c. and all public property whatsoever, shall be made over, with inventories thereof, to such commissioners as shall be appointed by the generals commanding the British and French forces conjointly to deliver and receive the same.

Art. 2. It is likewise agreed that as soon as the ratification of the present capitulation shall be exchanged, the gates of the town and the sluices shall be occupied by detachments of the British army, and the French troops shall evacuate the fortress at noon on the 17th instant.

Art. 3. It is further agreed that this capitulation shall be ratified by the generals commanding in chief the British and French armies: and that the ratifications shall be exchanged at the French advanced posts on the Middleburgh Road, at 12 o'clock this night; in default of which, the present capitulation and suspension of arms to be considered as null and void.

Given under our hands at Flushing, this 15th day of August 1809.

(Signed) G. COCKBURN, Captain H. M. S. Belleisle, commanding the British Flotilla.

ROB. LONG, Colonel, Adjutant General.

(Signed) F. MONTONNET, Capitaine d'Artillerie.

P. L'EVEQUE, Capitaine Commandant du Genie.

Approved and ratified by us,

(Signed) CHATHAM, Lieutenant-General commanding the Forces.

R. STRACHAN, Rear-Admiral, commanding the Naval Forces.

Vu et ratifié,

(Signed) MONNET, General de Division.

(A true copy)

(Signed) T. CAREY, Lieutenant-Colonel, Military Secretary.

No. VII.—*Copy of a Disputch from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 18th August 1809.—Received 21st Aug.*

*Middleburgh, 18th Aug. 1809.*

My lord; I have the honour to transmit, for your lordship's information, a copy of the Articles of Capitulation for the surrender of the towns Zeirik Zee, and Browershaven, and the Islands of Schowen and Duiveland, concluded on the 15th instant, by lieutenant general the earl of Rosslyn and rear admiral sir R. Keats, with the deputies of those towns and islands: and I have much satisfaction in acquainting your lordship, that I have every reason to believe we shall be enabled to draw very ample supplies of cattle, spirits, and

biscuit, from that quarter.—The enclosed return of the late garrison of Flushing, received from gen. Monnet last night, so materially differs from that which accompanied my dispatch of the 16th instant, that I think it expedient to transmit it for your lordship's information.—I am also informed, that the enemy, during this service, has suffered a very heavy loss in killed and wounded, which, together with the prisoners of war who have fallen into our hands of the enemy's force opposed to us in this island, may very fairly be stated at 9,000 men. (Signed) CHATHAM.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. VII.)

ARTICLES of Capitulation, entered into for the surrender of the towns of Zeirik Zee and Browsershaven, and the whole of the islands of Schowen and Duiveland, to his Britannic Majesty's forces, and concluded between the Earl of Rosslyn, Lieut. General, and Richard Goodwin Keats, K. B. Rear Admiral of the Blue, on the one part; and Mr. J. Nelemans, Mr. Secretary Van Dopff, and Mr. J. de Kater, Members of the Regency, Deputies from the towns of Zeirik Zee and Browsershaven, and the whole of the islands of Schowen and Duiveland, on the other part.

The said deputies, in consequence of the eighth Article of the Capitulation of the town of Middleburgh, communicated to them by the prefect of Zeeland, and in conformity to the disposition from him of the 6th Aug. have expressed their readiness to accede to the conditions of the said Capitulation, and to surrender the towns of Zeirik Zee and Browsershaven, and the whole of the islands of Schowen and Duiveland, to his Britannic Majesty's forces, upon the following Articles of Capitulation:

Art. 1. Security shall be granted to every person, public functionaries, private persons, citizens, and inhabitants, whatever their political opinions may have been, or now are, provided they conduct themselves as peaceable citizens, and conform to such regulations as shall be hereafter established by the authority of the British government.

Art. 2. Protection shall be granted to all private property, but all public property is to be accounted for, to such commissioners as shall be named by the general and admiral commanding his Britannic Majesty's forces.

Art. 3. The arms of the inhabitants,

which have been received from the government, shall be delivered up to such officer as shall be appointed on the part of his Britannic Majesty to receive the same; but it shall be permitted to the magistrates to retain such proportion of them, and to arm such part of the burghers for the purposes of the internal police of the towns, as shall appear to be proper and necessary to the officers commanding in the island on the part of his Britannic Majesty; but none shall be retained or used, except subject to his authority and his discretion.

Art. 4. Public functionaries and their families, shall be permitted, if they desire it, to return to any other part of Holland; but such as shall remain shall, if required and authorized so to do by the officer commanding in the islands, continue to exercise their several functions for the administration of the affairs of the towns and islands aforesaid.

Art. 5. Inhabitants who are absent from their houses shall be permitted to return with their property, subject to the conditions in the first Article.

Art. 6. Every care will be taken that the quartering of the troops stationed in the towns and islands shall be made as little burthensome to the inhabitants as possible.

Art. 7. If any misunderstanding shall arise regarding the foregoing Articles, they shall be explained in favour of the inhabitants of the towns and islands aforesaid.

Done on board his Britannic Majesty's ship *Superb*, off Cattendyke, 15th August 1809. (Signed) ROSSLYN, Lieut. Gen.  
R. G. KEATS,  
J. DE KATER,  
JOH. NELEMANS,  
A. J. VAN DOPFF.

No. VIII.—*Copy of a Dispatch from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 19th Aug. 1809.—Received 24th Aug.*

*Middleburg, 19th Aug. 1809.*

My Lord; I have the honour of acquainting your lordship that it is my intention to proceed to South Beveland tomorrow, where the light troops of the army under lieut. gen. lord Rosslyn, the reserve under lieut. gen. John Hope, together with the second division under lieut. gen. lord Huntley, with the light brigades of artillery, are already assembled. The third division of the army under lieut. gen. Grosvenor embarked this morning, as well as will the first, commanded by major

gen. Graham. In the course of to-morrow these two divisions, together with the cavalry and heavy ordnance, will instantly proceed up the Scheldt and rendezvous at Batz, to which place rear-adm. sir Richard Strachan intended proceeding as this day.—The fourth division of this army will remain here, and I shall entrust the command of this island to lieut. general M. Fraser, in whose zeal, judgment, and experience, I can fully confide, and I have given directions to this officer to correspond directly with your lordship on any occasion which may require it.—I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

No. IX.—*Copy of a Letter from the Earl of Chatham to Visc. Castlereagh, dated 29th Aug. 1809.—Received 1st Sept.*

*Head Quarters, Batz,  
29th Aug. 1809.*

My Lord; Major Bradford delivered to me your lordship's dispatch of the 21st inst. signifying to me his Majesty's commands that I should convey to lieut. gen. sir Eyre Coote, the general and other officers and troops employed before Flushing, and particularly to those of the artillery and engineer departments, his Majesty's most gracious approbation of their conduct, and which I have obeyed with the most sincere satisfaction.—I had the honour in my last dispatch of acquainting your lordship with my intention of proceeding to this place, and I should have been most happy to have been enabled to have announced to your lordship the further progress of this army. Unfortunately, however, it becomes my duty to state to your lordship that, from the concurrent testimony from so many quarters as to leave no doubt of the truth of the information, the enemy appears to have collected so formidable a force as to convince me that the period was arrived at which my Instructions would have directed me to withdraw the army under my command, even if engaged in actual operation.—I had certainly early understood on my arrival at Walcheren, that the enemy were assembling in considerable force at all points, but I was unwilling to give too much credit to these reports, and I determined to persevere until I was satisfied upon the fullest information that all further attempts would be unavailable. From all our intelligence it appears that the force of the enemy in this quarter distributed between the garrisons of Bergen-op-zoom, Breda, Lillo, and Antwerp, and

cantonned on the opposite coast, is not less than 35,000 men, and by some statements is estimated higher. Though a landing on the continent might, I have no doubt, have been forced, yet as the siege of Antwerp, the possession of which could alone have secured to us any of the ulterior objects of the Expedition, was by this state of things rendered utterly impracticable; such a measure, if successful, could have led to no solid advantage, and the retreat of the army, which must at an early period have been inevitable, would have been exposed to much hazard. The utmost force (and that daily decreasing) that I could have brought into the field after providing for the occupation of Walcheren and South Beveland, would have amounted to about 23,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry. Your Lordship must at once see even if the enemy's force had been less numerous than represented, that after the necessary detachments to observe the garrisons of Bergen-op-zoom and Breda, and securing our communications, how very inadequate a force must have remained for operations against Lillo and Liefkenshoeik and ultimately against Antwerp, which town, so far from being in the state which had been reported, is from very correct accounts represented to be in a complete state of defence, and the enemy's ships had been brought up and placed in security under the guns of the citadel.—Under these circumstances, however mortifying to me to see the progress arrested of an army from whose good conduct and valour I had every thing to hope, I felt that my duty left me no other choice than to close my operations here; and it will always be a consolation to me to think, that I have not been induced lightly to commit the safety of the army confided to me, or the reputation of his Majesty's arms. It was an additional satisfaction to find, that the unanimous opinions of the lt. generals of this army, whom I thought it right to consult, more out of respect to them, than that I thought a doubt could be entertained on the subject, concurred entirely in the sentiments I have submitted to your lordship.—I am concerned to say, that the effect of the climate at this unhealthy period of the year is felt most seriously, and that the number of sick already is little short of 3,000 men.—It is my intention to withdraw gradually from the advanced position in this island, and sending into Walcheren such an additional force as may be necessary to secure that important possession,



to embark the remainder of the troops, and to hold them in readiness to await his Majesty's further command, which I shall most anxiously expect.—I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

No. X.—*Copy of a Dispatch from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 6th Sept. 1809.—Received 8th Sept.*

*Head Quarters, Middleburg, Sept. 6th, 1809.*

My lord; I have waited with much anxiety for an answer to my dispatch, which I had the honour of addressing to your lordship so long ago as the 29th ult. and which I hoped would have arrived before the evacuation of South Beveland, and the embarkation of the army, (which, from the want of tonnage, and the immense number of sick, has been a work of extensive difficulty) could have taken place. The whole have, however, arrived before Flushing this day, and as in the crowded state of the men on board and the increasing sickness among officers and men, the smallest delay in their sailing might be productive, in the opinion of the medical men, of the most fatal consequence, I have thought it my duty to desire that the admiral would direct all ships having troops on board, to proceed to England with all possible dispatch.—I am concerned to add, that the number of sick in this army exceeds 8,000 men, and the great proportion of general officers, who from illness have been obliged to go home, has created the most serious embarrassment.—I have not been able to collect the materials necessary to reply to your lordship's letter of the 6th ult. but I hope to receive that in the course of to-morrow; but I felt it of the utmost consequence not to delay for a moment conveying this information to your lordship.—I have, &c. CHATHAM.

No. XI.—*Copy of a Dispatch from the Earl of Chatham to Viscount Castlereagh, dated 7th Sept. 1809.—Received 10th Sept.*

*Middleburg, 7th Sept. 1809.*

My lord; I received your lordship's dispatch by the messenger Sylvester, and have the honour of acquainting your lordship, that in obedience to his Majesty's commands, the whole of the troops at present embarked will proceed without delay to England.—I have thought it necessary to leave, for the protection of this island, a garrison consisting of about 15,000 men, according to the annexed return which I have the honour of trans-

mitting for his Majesty's information. This amount of force is the least which, under present circumstances, I have judged to be requisite, and I have allotted this in the full reliance that a sufficient naval force will be stationed here, without which aid I feel it my duty to state to your lordship, I should not consider this island to be defensible.—I have, &c. &c.

CHATHAM.

No. XII.—*A DISPATCH from the Earl of Chatham to the Viscount Castlereagh, dated 9th Sept. 1809.—Received 13th Sept.*

*Middleburg, Sept. 9th, 1809.*

My lord; I have the honour of acquainting your lordship that it is my intention to avail myself of his Majesty's most gracious permission to return to England, and that I propose embarking in the course of to-morrow, or the following day, leaving the temporary command of this island in the hands of lieut. gen. Sir Eyre Coote. I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

No. XIII.—*A LETTER from the Earl of Chatham to the Earl of Liverpool, dated 22d Dec. 1809.*

*Hill Street, 22d Dec. 1809.*

My Lord; Having perused the Address of the City of London presented to his Majesty on Wednesday last, together with his Majesty's Answer thereto, I feel it my duty to represent to your lordship, as one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, in order to its being laid before his Majesty, that I am most entirely ready to submit every part of my conduct to such military investigation as his Majesty may be pleased to direct, and that I shall not be less so, whenever Parliament may assemble, to meet an inquiry, which in their wisdom they may judge it fit to institute into my conduct, being perfectly conscious of having discharged with zeal and with fidelity the important trust which his Majesty was most graciously pleased to confide in me.—I have, &c.

CHATHAM.

# C.

EXTRACTS OF THE DISPATCHES FROM  
LIEUT. GEN. SIR E. COOTE.

No. I.—*DISPATCH from Lieut. Gen. Sir E. Coote, to Viscount Castlereagh.*

*Middleburg, 31st August 1809.*

My Lord; I have the honour to transmit to your lordship a letter addressed by

the Inspector of Hospitals in this island to me, applying in the most urgent manner for additional medical assistance; and I lament to say that the measure is rendered of the highest consequence, the sick of the army increasing daily to a most alarming degree. I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE, Lieut. Gen.

P. S. I would strongly recommend that three or four large hospital ships should be forthwith sent from England, sea air being found of great advantage in the disorder with which the troops are affected.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. I.)

*Middleburgh, 31st August 1809.*

Sir; I do myself the honour of representing to you, that the divisions of the army which are in South Beveland and in Walcheren are becoming so extremely sickly, and the medical officers both of the regiments and of the staff are suffering so severely from the effects of the climate, and the excessive duty they have to perform, that it is with the utmost difficulty we can have the sick of this island properly attended to. A pressing requisition was sent from Flushing yesterday for medical aid, but it was not possible to comply with it. Surgeon Lidderdale, who is stationed there, was instructed, however, to make such arrangements as will enable him to carry on the service for the present without injury to the men.—I have this moment received a positive order from the adjutant general, desiring that one physician, one staff surgeon, and one hospital mate, should be sent forthwith to South Beveland. It is with concern I am obliged to add, that I have but one medical officer (a staff surgeon) whom I can possibly spare from this place without leaving a portion of the sick unattended to.—Under these circumstances of great and evident difficulty, and with the certainty of our wants increasing rapidly, and our means of meeting them diminishing by the sickness of medical officers, I beg to submit to your consideration the absolute necessity of sending express to England for medical aid, and of applying that a fast sailing vessel should be appointed to bring out the assistance that is so urgently required. I have, &c.

JOHN WEBBE, Inspector of Hospitals.  
To Lieut. Gen. E. Coote, &c.

(Second Inclosure referred to in No. I.)

*Head Quarters, Goes, 30th August, 1809.*

Sir; The state and numbers of the

sick in this island requiring additional medical assistance, I have it in command to desire that on the receipt of this letter you will be pleased to direct a physician to the forces, a medical staff surgeon, and an hospital mate, to proceed forthwith from Walcheren to this place. I have, &c.

ROB. LONG, Colonel, Adj. Gen.

No. II.—DISPATCH from Lieut. Gen. Sir E. Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated *Middleburgh, 14th Sept. 1809.*

My Lord; It is with much regret that I have to report to your lordship the indisposition of Mr. Webbe, inspector of Hospitals, who was attacked yesterday with the Zealand fever, and is now so ill, as to be unable to attend to the arduous duties of his situation, which he has hitherto, under many difficulties, filled with the greatest zeal and ability.—Mr. Webbe's illness makes it highly necessary that an inspector of hospitals, equally qualified with himself, should forthwith be sent to this island. Of this necessity your lordship will best judge by an inspection of the enclosed daily report of sick.—On the 31st ult. I did myself the honour of enclosing to your lordship an urgent application from Mr. Webbe, for additional medical aid. On the 2d inst. your lordship was pleased to inform me that the medical board should be instructed to send out, without delay, the assistance required, and also a sufficient quantity of medicines, such as might be best suited to remedy and counteract the disorder prevalent here.—I am now concerned to acquaint your lordship, that, to this day we have only received one staff surgeon and three hospital mates, without any additional supply of medicines, hospital bedding, or comfort of any kind, so imperiously called for, by the afflicting number of our sick. I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

(Inclosure referred to in No. II.)

DAILY STATE of the SICK in the Island of Walcheren, 13th Sept. 1809.

Officers, 220: Serjeants, 348: Drummers, 121: Rank and File, 7,626.

THOMAS WALSH, Lt. Col. D. A. G.

No. III.—DISPATCH from Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated *Middleburgh, 17th Sept. 1809.*

My lord; I have the honour to transmit for your lordship's information, the copy of a letter which I addressed to

lieut. gen. the earl of Chatham, when I was left in command of Walcheren.—A perusal of that letter will fully acquaint your lordship with my ideas of this island, and our means of keeping it. The prospect of our affairs, since that period has not brightened, but on the contrary has assumed a much more alarming appearance, as you will judge from the following statement,—The force I then stated as necessary for our security was 20,000 men; that left in the island was about 16,000, of which number 8,200 are now sick, leaving us only 7,800 men for all defence. Our loss by deaths has in the mean while been very great, the casualties within the last fortnight amounting to 498.—I can assure your lordship, without any fear of exaggeration, as the following statement will bear me out, that the situation of the troops in this island is deplorable: and it grieves me to say, that none of the medical assistance (one staff surgeon and three hospital mates excepted,) or any of the promised comforts, have yet arrived. On the contrary, our medical corps is daily diminished, either from sickness or from the necessity of sending some of the hospital staff with sick men to England. Some corps from these causes are now left with one assistant surgeon.—I am enabled to give your Lordship a most correct account of these melancholy facts, as I have only this day completed my inspection of the general and regimental hospitals at the several places named in the margin [Middelbourg, Veer, Armuyden, St. Joostland, Flushing, Ramakins.] I therefore write with the fresh impression on my mind of the miserable situation of the greater proportion of our sick, not through any fault of the medical gentlemen, for I must do them the justice of the most unwearied exertion and exemplary attention, but owing to the unavoidable want of accommodation existing in this country, and in our own resources. Middelbourg, from the size of its buildings, affords the best accommodation, but even in that town, the sick are so crowded, as to lay two in one bed in several places, and have no circulation of air: besides, from the hourly admission of bad cases into the general hospitals, the slighter ones, though far from being in a fit state, are necessarily sent to the regimental hospitals to make room. You must add to these disadvantages, the total want of convalescent wards, whereby relapses are often caused.—At Veer a large

church (under other circumstances an eligible situation,) contains about 400 patients; the other places occupied as hospitals in this town are miserably small and excessively crowded.—At Armuyden the accommodation for the numerous sick is wretched. But all this falls far short of the truly deplorable situation in which the sick of the garrison of Flushing are placed; exposed in many of the hospitals to all the inclemency of this unwholesome climate, owing to the damaged state of the roofs, never repaired since the siege.—This is a lamentable picture; but it is proper I should add, that every possible exertion has been, and is still making to improve our situation, especially at Flushing; but the total inadequacy of our means renders all our endeavours of comparatively trivial importance.—I have thought the situation of the troops so novel and distressing, and our future prospects so discouraging, as pointed out by the inclosed letter from deputy inspector Burrowes, that I have judged it expedient to send this letter by my aide-camp capt. Worsley, who, having attended me through every hospital, is fully enabled to give such additional details as your lordship may require. I have, &c.

EDMUND COOTE.

P. S. Since the foregoing was written, I learn that four or five medical officers have arrived from England; but we have lost Mr. Aveling, deputy inspector of hospitals, who died last night; and the inspector Mr. Webbe has just obtained my leave to return home, on account of severe illness.

E. C.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. III.)

*Middelbourg, 9th September 1809.*

My lord; Placed as I am, in the command of this island, I think myself called upon by every feeling of public and private duty, to lay before your lordship my opinion of our means to retain possession of it.—My ideas upon this subject are already well known to your lordship, having more than once declared them in private communications; but it is now necessary that I should state them in this official form, in justification of any future events.—The length of coast we have to watch and to defend (surrounded as the two-thirds of the circumference of this island are by the enemy's possessions) cannot in my mind require less than 20,000 men to guard it effectually; and we must take into consideration the great

facilities which the enemy has of assembling, unmolested, boats of all descriptions through the canals of Dunkirk, Ostend, Bruges, and Ghent, as well as from every part of Holland.—A force of 14,000 men has been appropriated for the defence of Walcheren, out of which 6,000 are now sick and unfit for any duty. I should not estimate that number as sufficient against a serious attack, and I need scarcely remark to your lordship, that unless we have a force equal to meet the enemy on the beach, and afterwards in the field, our tenure of the island will not be of long duration, when once he has made good his landing.—Joostland, from its great proximity to South Beveland, is the most exposed to an attack, and should therefore be watched with a jealous eye. In its present state it offers but few means of defence. Two battalions are stationed there, but we have no barracks or proper quarters for that number of men, and sickness is much more to be dreaded in that island than in Walcheren. Blockhouses at certain distances in rear of the dyke opposite to South Beveland appear to me the best sort of barrack and defence. These would be tedious and expensive in building, we must therefore leave them out of our calculations of immediate defence. Your lordship is aware that, by the erection of batteries, the enemy will soon force our gun boats to quit the Sloo passage.—Vere, in its present state, is a place of no strength. The approaches of an enemy along the dykes on either flank are completely covered, and their defences so extremely weak, as to offer but very slight resistance. Considerable expence will consequently be necessary here, it being an important point from its harbour, and contiguity to North Beveland and Schowen. The commanding officer of engineers has further reported this place to be within full range of shot and shells from the southern extremity of North Beveland.—Flushing, without casemates, cannot be considered a fortress. Its general defences are weak, and will require much time and expence to be put in a proper state.—The ships of war, I understand from the best authority, will not be able to keep the sea, or the surrounding channels during the winter. They must come into Flushing harbour, where they will cease to be of any use to our external security.—Walcheren, possessed by us, must have every neighbouring island its enemy; therefore Great

Britain would have, in a great measure, to feed its inhabitants, as well as the army and navy on this station.—Viewing the possession of Walcheren in the light that I have represented, and left as I am to retain it, I should conceive myself highly culpable did I not submit to your lordship my conviction of its present defective, and, I may add, untenable state.—After such an exposition, his Majesty's ministers will be the best judges of the propriety or possibility of keeping the island. The advantages must indeed be great that can compensate the loss of lives and treasure which the retention must necessarily occasion. I have, &c.

LYRE COOTE, Lieut. Gen.

*Lieut. Gen. the Earl of Chatham.*

(Second Inclosure referred to in No. III.)

*Middleburgh, 18th Sept. 1809.*

Sir; In obedience to your orders, I have the honour to report to you, my observations and opinions respecting the sickness now prevailing in the army under your command. In doing this I need scarcely inform you, that at all periods the climate of Zealand has been peculiarly destructive to the health of armies.—Remittent and intermittent fever are the endemics of this country; from these the natives have at all times suffered much, but strangers and particular troops to a much greater degree: with British soldiers, whether from peculiarity of constitution, or of the predisposing causes, the effects are much more general and aggravated. To shew to what a degree this is already the case, I have only to request your attention to the accompanying sick return for the last week. You will there perceive the lamentable fact, that already more than half the army under your command are in hospital; and, from the numerous additions daily, nay almost hourly, swelling the sick list at a time when the weather appears so favourable to health, and the sickly season so little advanced, you will be enabled to form a judgment, as well as myself, of what we have to look forward to, nor need I explain to you, who have so lately visited all the hospitals in this island, the distressing embarrassments we experience from medical officers and orderlies daily falling ill, and the impossibility of procuring adequate accommodation and attendance for the numerous sick. The wretched state of the hospitals is greatly to be deplored, more especially at Flushing, where, in

consequence of the late bombardment, the very best buildings that can be procured as hospitals are not weather proof. Some consolation might be derived from the number, though comparatively small, in the column of discharges; but this, I am sorry to say, requires an explanation unfavourable to our hopes; nearly four hundred of those marked discharged, being obstinate cases sent to England, as affording the only chance of recovery; and many of the others still labouring under disease, but removed to convalescent barracks for the purpose of making room in hospital, for more recent and aggravated cases; so that but few have been actually discharged for duty; and with those there is but too much reason to apprehend relapses on exposure to the usual vicissitudes attending the duties of a soldier in this climate. Under such circumstances, I am of opinion, that we have but little grounds to calculate on the efficiency in this climate for the next six months, of those who have laboured under serious attacks of the prevailing disease, probably not less than two-thirds of the army may become ineffective for that period; during which we have to expect a great mortality, not only from the effects of remittent and intermittent fever, but from other diseases which may be expected to supervene, and which will probably be particularly fatal to those already so much reduced.—A great many of the cases which have already occurred, have, I am sorry to say, run into typhus fever, the disposition to this disease is readily to be accounted for, and was probably more particularly to be expected amongst those who so lately laboured under it on their return from Corunna.—We have now, therefore, the effects of contagion, in addition to climate, to contend with; and I should ill discharge my duties to the service, or my country, if I concealed the serious apprehensions I entertain from their effects; not only on the present, but possibly future efficiency of the army.—From the knowledge which you possess of the abilities and experience of Mr. Grant, deputy inspector of hospitals, it will, I am sure, be satisfactory to you, as it has been to me, to know that he coincides in the sentiments which I have taken the liberty of submitting to you. I have now only to apologize for the hasty manner in which the pressure of my duties has compelled me to make this commu-

mication. I have, &c.

F. BURROWS,  
Deputy Inspector of Hos-  
pitals, and Senior Me-  
dical Officer.

To *Lieut. Gen. Sir Eyre Coote, &c. &c.*

(Third Inclosure referred to in No. III.)

WEEKLY RETURN OF SICK AND WOUNDED belonging to the British army, serving under the command of *lieut.-gen. sir Eyre Coote, K. B.* in general and regimental hospitals in the island of Walcheren, from 10th to 16th September 1809, both days inclusive.

In General Hospitals	769
In Regimental Do.	6,375
Embarked this { Ter Veer	334
day at { Fort Ramakins	75
Total	7,553

F. BURROWS, Deputy In-  
spector of Hospitals.

(Fourth Inclosure referred to in No. III.)

DAILY STATE of the SICK in the island of Walcheren, 19th Sept. 1809.

Officers, 224: Serjeants, 366: Drummers, 138: Rank and File, 8,123: Remarks, 3 Serjeants, 26 Rank and File dead.

No. III \*—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburg, 23d Sept. 1809.*

My lord; It is with deep concern that I find myself called upon so shortly after my letter of the 17th instant, again to address your lordship upon the same afflicting subject, the sickness of the troops.—The alarming progress hourly made by this fatal disease, is such that if it should continue in the same proportion for three weeks longer, (and there is every probability that it will) our possession of this island must become very precarious, our chief dependence will then be upon the navy, and that during the winter months will be extremely uncertain.—The English newspapers will inform the enemy of our perilous situation, exclusive of the information which we cannot prevent him from daily receiving from this island, closely surrounded as it is by his possessions and filled with his partizans; under these circumstances, it is scarcely to be supposed that he will lose so favourable an opportunity of attacking Walcheren.—For your lordship's information, I enclose

the returns of the sick for the last three days, from which you will perceive the frightful increase which has taken place between the 17th and 22d instant, the deaths, I am sorry to add, are becoming daily more numerous.—The 23d regiment has suffered so much, that I have found it necessary to send it home. The 6th and the 81st are so extremely sickly that they have been struck off the list of duty. The 77th, 84th, and some other corps have almost arrived at the same inefficient state; and the enclosed copy of a letter from brig. gen. Montesor will give you a melancholy account of the garrison of Flushing.—At the representation of the principal medical officers, I have determined on sending 2,000 sick, belonging to regiments in the island, to England, they are at present totally incapable of duty, and must remain so for months to come. It is therefore most desirable that they should return home, where they will have a chance of recovering; and their removal will afford us better accommodation for the sick that remain.—I trust your lordship will approve of this measure, which in fact is one of necessity, not of choice, as in some regiments we have scarcely a sufficiency of healthy men to act as orderlies in their hospitals.—No medical assistance (two hospital mates excepted) has reached me since my last, in the mean while the number of our medical officers is decreasing by sickness. No comforts or wine for the sick have arrived, the consequences of which is, that we already begin to be in great distress for port wine, although I have ordered the commissary general to buy up at an exorbitant price, all that he could procure. I am further concerned to state that we shall be soon in want of bark, an article of such indispensable necessity in the prevailing disorder; if it be the intention to retain Walcheren, I would strongly recommend the reinforcements should be sent from England at the latter end of October, or beginning of November, when the troops will not be so liable to feel the effects of the endemic disease of this island. I have, &c.

(Signed) EYRE COOTE.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. III \*.)

DAILY STATE of the Sick in the island of Walcheren.

	Officers.	Serjeants.	Drums.	Rank & file.
21st Sept. 1809	217	380	136	8,684
22d Do. - -	223	384	139	8,799

23d Sept. 1809 214 382 190 9,046.  
(Signed) THO. WALSH, Lieut. Col.  
D. A. G.

No. IV.—DISPATCH from Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburg, 29th Sept. 1809.

My lord; I have had the honour of your lordship's dispatch of the 24th inst. by the return of my aide de camp captain Worsley.—My letter of the 23d inst. will have informed your lordship that my anxiety to remove the sick to England had not suffered me to await the receipt of instructions without effect. A selection of 2,000 of the most proper cases for such a removal has been made by my orders, but the boisterous state of the weather, which has prevented the 9th light dragoons from leaving the bason of Flushing to make room for other transports, has not allowed me hitherto to embark the sick or the 23d regiment.—I regret most sincerely that other essential services should have rendered it almost impossible to provide an adequate and immediate supply of medical assistance for the sudden and unexpected calamity which has fallen upon this army.—Your lordship may rest satisfied that no exertions have been omitted by me to call in every aid, and procure every comfort which can be obtained from the resources of this island in addition to our own. I feel too sensibly the distressing situation of the troops to neglect any means by which I can hope to relieve their wants or improve their condition.—The inclosed copy of a letter addressed by my military secretary to the acting inspector of hospitals, with his answer, will prove to your lordship that I had not been unmindful of the assistance that might perhaps have been derived from the medical practitioners in Walcheren.—The evil I lament to say encreases daily; brigadier general Browne, where a brigade (originally a very strong one) is stationed at Annuyam and St. Joostland, was under the necessity yesterday of reducing his picquets at the Sloo passage from 80 to 50 men. This day he has repeated his inability to permit more than 30 men for that important duty.—I have been obliged to remove the two regiments in St. Joostland; one of them, the 81st, had not 40 men able to carry arms. I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. IV.)

Middleburg, 28th Sept. 1809.  
Sir; Lieut. gen. sir Eyre Coote feeling

it a duty he owes to himself to establish the fact, that no measures on his part have been wanting to produce for the troops the advantage of such medical aid as the country would afford, in addition to our own resources; I have been directed by him to require that you will state for his satisfaction, whether he did not upwards of three weeks ago recommend that you should call in the assistance and advice of the medical gentlemen of this island, and whether it is not in your knowledge that he made the same representation to Mr. Inspector Webbe. Of the objections made by Mr. Webbe and yourself to this proposition, it is not for sir Eyre Coote to judge, but it has become necessary to prove that no means have been neglected by him that would add to the assistance of our sick. You will be pleased therefore to state to me in writing your motives for having declined the proposal made to you in the manner above mentioned. I am directed to avail myself of this opportunity to enquire what provision of bark is now in store for the sick. I have, &c. THOMAS WALSH,

*F. Burrows, esq.* Mil. Sec.  
*Acting Inspector of Hospitals.*

(Second Inclosure referred to in No. IV.)

*Middleburgh, 28th Sept. 1809.*

Sir; I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, and to state, that in the course of my several communications with sir Eyre Coote on the subject of the sickness prevailing in the army under his command, amongst the various propositions suggested by his extreme anxiety as well to stop the progress of disease as to render every comfort and accommodation to the unfortunate sufferers, the idea of employing medical gentlemen of the island to act in the arduous duties of the medical department was suggested.—I beg leave to state that my objections to the above proposal were founded on the indifferent opinion I entertained of the skill and abilities of the practitioners in this town, and the improbability of being able to engage in our service medical men of any experience in the treatment of disease; the total impossibility of the sick soldiers being able to express the symptoms which characterize this disease in language to be understood, would of itself preclude the possibility of our drawing any advantage from the adoption of this measure.—Agreeably to your orders, I

have to report the quantity of bark in store amounts to 300lbs. I have, &c.

*To Col. Walsh.* FRANCIS BURROWS,  
*Acting Inspector of Hospitals.*

No. V.—DISPATCH from Lieut. Gen. Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated *Middleburgh, 29th Sept. 1809.*

My lord; The enclosed letter from the inspector of hospitals, on the expediency of issuing port wine in lieu of spirits to the convalescents, in the proportion of one pint per day to each man, I have the honour to transmit for your lordship's consideration.—Of the beneficial effects of such measure, I have not the least doubt, but we have scarcely a sufficiency of port wine for the sick, for the present; and the quantity that would be required to serve it out to upwards of 5,000 convalescents, makes it necessary that supplies of that article should be sent from England, if it should be thought advisable to adopt the recommendation of Mr. Inspector Burrows.—I take this opportunity of reporting to your lordship, that only 300lbs. of powder of bark now remain in store, a quantity not more than sufficient to answer the consumption of four or five days. I have, &c. EYRE COOTE.

No. VI.—DISPATCH from Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated *Middleburgh, 2d Oct. 1809.*

My lord; I take the earliest opportunity of transmitting for your lordship's information, the copy of a letter addressed to me by Dr. Blanc, acting physician general, and Dr. M'Gregor, inspector of hospitals, both arrived from England three days ago, on the subject of the sick in this island.—The sentiments contained in that letter agree too fully with those expressed by me at different times to your lordship to require any comment on them; I have only to recommend most strongly the measures they have suggested.—I have, &c. EYRE COOTE.

(Inclosure referred to in No. VI.)

*Middleburgh, 1st Oct. 1809.*

Sir; In the present distressful state of the medical service in this island, the most important measure for the relief of the sick consists in finding the ready means of transportation to England for as many as can bear being conveyed with safety. The insalubrious state of the air is such, that hardly any have recovered sufficiently to return to effective duty;

and great numbers who had attained to a state of convalescence have relapsed. The unfavourable state of accommodation and supplies is also such as to call for the utmost exertions to save the lives of the convalescents, and to make room for that succession of recent and acute cases, which we are sorry to say, continue daily to press for admittance into the various hospitals at the different stations in this island. With a view to provide the adequate means for this important piece of service, we beg leave to state, that as the transports have been found highly inconvenient, dangerous, and inadequate, we take the liberty to suggest, that the only safe, speedy, and effectual means of performing this service, would be to send from England six or seven ships of the line, with no greater complement of men than would be sufficient to navigate them; the guns of the lower deck being taken out, with a sufficiency of hammocks for 500 men. The number of men now in this island in a state to be thus conveyed we compute to be from 5 to 6,000, and they are daily accumulating. Amongst other reasons for adopting this mode of conveyance, we beg to specify, that the number of medical officers here is not greater than what is required at the hospitals, and that the surgeons and assistant surgeons of the navy, not being liable to sea sickness, which frequently disables entirely the medical officers of the army from doing their duty, would be found peculiarly well qualified for taking care of these men on their passage. It is indeed absolutely impossible for the land service to furnish a medical attendant for each vessel according to the present mode of conveyance.—We have, &c.

GILBERT BLANE.

Act. Physician Gen.

JAMES M'GREGOR, M. D.

Insp. of Army Hospitals.

No. VII.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. Gen. Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, Middelburg, 3d Oct. 1809.*

My lord; Dr. M'Gregor, the inspector of hospitals, has just reported to me the urgent necessity of at least 300 men of one of the veteran battalions being sent out here, to be employed as orderlies in the hospitals.—I am myself well aware of the expediency of this measure, from the difficulty that exists in many regiments of providing orderlies for the proportion of sick in their own hospitals, but the want

is still more forcibly felt in the general hospitals.—A detachment of 50 rank and file of the 7th royal veteran Battalions had originally been embarked for this essential service, but that number, so disproportionate in itself for our numerous sick, has been very considerably diminished by the effects of sickness.—I have therefore to request that your lordship will be pleased to adopt the necessary measures for having this desirable succour sent out to this island with the least possible delay. A proportion of intelligent non-commissioned officers will be required to act as hospital clerks and stewards.—I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

No. VIII.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. Gen. Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middelburgh, 6th Oct. 1809.*

My lord, I am to report, for the information of your lordship, that the situation of the sick continues much the same as when I had last the honour to address your lordship on that subject. The inclosed Daily State will give the best information of their numbers, which, I regret to say, still increase.—The 23d regiment has been embarked and has sailed for England. It was so completely *hors de combat*, that it was conveyed from hence to Flushing in waggons.—This day I have ordered 1000 sick and convalescents, selected from the whole army, to be put on board ship, and I hope that, if the wind continues fair, they will sail this evening. In the course of a day or two a second embarkation of nearly double that extent will take place, which will tend greatly to clear our crowded hospitals, and relieve our medical officers of some part of their laborious duty. An experiment is likewise to be tried by sending a portion of the convalescents on board the *Asia* and *Britannia* hospital ships, to try the effect of a change of air.—These large drafts, added to the numerous sick and convalescents remaining here, have rendered our effective force so very trivial as to make the defence of the island, if it should be attacked, extremely precarious. Your lordship must excuse my adverting so frequently to this subject, for I cannot be supposed insensible to the critical situation in which I am thereby left.—Your lordship will also pardon my anxiety to be informed of the intention of his Majesty's government as to the future fate of Walcheren, as that knowledge will very essentially affect the



measures which I shall then deem it necessary to pursue. If it is to be kept, an object of the very first importance must be the proper accommodation of the troops during the approaching winter, to all the severity of which, in their present unsheltered state, they must unavoidably be exposed.—Many of the houses occupied in Flushing, as temporary barracks, are half unroofed; and the deficiency of tradesmen and labourers, exclusive of the want of lime, bricks, and other materials, cause the partial repairs I have ordered to proceed very slowly.—The regiments, owing to their sickly state, not being able to give any workmen, I have been under the necessity of employing 400 of the inhabitants for the pressing repair of the barracks and fortifications at Flushing and Veere. The expenditure thus occasioned is very considerable, and will become still more so if we are to retain the island, as in that case these repairs and additions must be made more substantial and permanent.—Much distress and consequent sickness arise from the want of cooking places and cleaning houses at the several large buildings occupied by the troops as temporary barracks; so long as the warm and dry weather continued, the soldiers could manage to cook in the open air; but that can no longer be the case when the rainy and frosty season sets in.—Another great privation under which the troops labour is the want of their heavy baggage and warm clothing left in England agreeably to order when they came on this service. If we are to remain here, no time should be lost in forwarding these essential articles.—An assistant inspector general of barracks and three assistants have arrived here, conformably to your lordship's letter of the 10th Sept.; but their instructions are solely to report upon the state and condition of the barracks and buildings occupied as such, and to instruct in the barrack duties those officers who may be appointed to act as barrack masters in this island. They have no authority to incur expence in the repairs or additions necessary to render the barracks habitable during the winter, and I therefore fear that their mission will be found totally useless, as far as regards the improvements of barrack accommodation in Walcheren. I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

(Inclosure referred to in No. VIII.)

DAILY STATE of the Sick in the Island of Walcheren.

Officers, 159; Serjeants, 334; Drummers, 156; Rank and File, 8,855.

THOMAS WALSH, Lt. Col. D. A. G.

No. IX.—DISPATCH from Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburgh, 6th October 1809.

My Lord, The unexampled and increasing sickness of the troops in this island rendering it almost impossible to provide a sufficient number of healthy men (exclusive of other unavoidable duties) to act as orderlies in the hospitals as expressed to your lordship in my dispatch of the 3rd instant; I have found it indispensable to accede to the recommendation contained in the inclosed copy of a letter from the inspector of hospitals.—I have accordingly issued a general order, a copy of which is herewith transmitted, authorizing the commanding officers of corps to procure ten men, inhabitants of the island, under the denomination of pioneers, to be employed in all hospital and fatigue duties, at a daily pay of one florin.—I am well aware that this measure is unusual in Europe, but I am also sensible that it is my bounden duty to alleviate, by every practicable means, the heavy calamity which has fallen upon this fine army; and under this impression, I did not hesitate to adopt it, more especially when recommended by the principal medical officer.—It also forcibly struck me, that in the West Indies, where the disease is certainly sometimes more fatal, though never so overpowering as on this island, sixty black pioneers are allowed to every regiment. I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

(First Inclosure referred to in No. IX.)

Middleburgh, 4th Oct. 1809.

Sir; On account of the great and increasing sickness of the army on this island, and the consequent inability of the corps to provide the orderlies or attendants on the sick so indispensably requisite at the present moment, I beg leave to recommend, that ten of the native inhabitants be hired and attached to every corps, in order to do the duties of fatigue about the respective hospitals and barracks where they are most required. I have, &c.

J. M'GREGOR, M. D.

Inspector of Hospitals.

Lieut. Gen. Sir Eyre Coote K. B. &amp;c. &amp;c.

(Second Inclosure referred to in No. IX.)

EXTRACT from General Orders, dated Middleburgh, 5th Oct. 1809.

With a view to ease the fatigue and

hospital duties, and thereby preserve as much as possible the health of the soldiers, lieutenant-general sir Eyre Coote has judged it advisable, under existing circumstances, to authorize commanding officers of corps to hire from among the inhabitants of the country, ten men to be employed as regimental pioneers, and who will be paid at the rate of one florin each per day. This allowance to be charged in the regimental pay lists in the same manner as of the pioneers actually belonging to the corps. The 9th Light Dragoons and the Royal Staff corps, on account of their comparative small numbers, will be allowed only four pioneers each. THO. WALSH.

Lieut. Col. D. A. G.

No. X. DISPATCH from Lieut. Gen. Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburgh, 14th Oct. 1809.

My lord ; I lose no time, in communicating to your lordship the enclosed extracts from the Amsterdam Court Gazette of the 12th instant, which has this instant been received.—I have further to observe, in confirmation of the intelligence contained in the above-mentioned extracts, that salutes were fired this morning by the batteries and gun vessels of the enemy, near Zerick Zee ; and a man of good appearance, who left Amsterdam last Sunday, the 8th instant, and has arrived here, states, that the ratification of the peace between Austria and France, was signed on the 3rd of this month ; in consequence of which an illumination has taken place. I have, &c. (Signed) EYRE COOTE.

(Inclosure referred to in No. X.)

EXTRACT from the Court Gazette of Amsterdam, dated 12 Oct. 1809.

Amsterdam, 10th Oct. 1809.

His majesty has this day received the glorious news, that peace has been signed at Altenburgh between France and Austria.

Amsterdam, 11th Oct. 1809.

The glorious intelligence of the peace being concluded between France and Austria has been announced to the inhabitants, by the firing of cannons, flags on the steeples and houses, and ringing of bells.

No. XI.—DISPATCH from Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburgh, 17th Oct. 1809.

My lord ; On the 3d instant I represented to your lordship the great advantages that would result to our hospitals

from a reinforcement of 300 men of one of the royal veteran battalions, to be employed as orderlies. To that representation, I have not hitherto had any answer, and I therefore take the liberty of transmitting a letter from the inspector general of hospitals on the subject, which I trust, will meet with your lordship's early and favourable consideration.—I also enclose a return of the regimental medical officers present with this army, and I need not dwell upon the lamentable deficiency it exhibits, or upon the urgent necessity of having all vacancies filled up with the least possible delay. EYRE COOTE.

(Inclosure referred to in No. XI.)

Middleburg, Oct. 17th, 1809.

Sir ; I have to request that you state to lieutenant-general sir Eyre Coote, that from the increasing sickness of the different corps here, and their inability to provide orderlies and attendants for the sick, it would be very desirable that 300 men of a veteran battalion could be procured for this duty. I have likewise to request that you will lay before the commander of the forces the inclosed return of the state of the regimental medical officers of the army under his command, the lamentable deficiency of this most necessary class of officers at the present moment will readily strike the general, as well as the necessity of having all vacancies and deficiencies in this class of officers filled up, and that all of them that are in England should be immediately ordered to join their corps here. I have, &c. JAS. MCGREGOR.

Inspector of Hospitals.

To Lieut.-Col. Walsh,  
Military Secretary,

No. XII.—DISPATCH from Lieut.-Gen. Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburgh, 22d October 1809.

My lord ; I am to acquaint your lordship, that with the advice of the inspector of hospitals in this island, and agreeably to the recommendation of the medical gentlemen sent here lately on a special mission, I have made a further embarkation of 1411 sick and convalescents for England, viz. 397 from Vecre, who sailed yesterday, and 1014 from Flushing, who will sail probably this evening.—The several embarkations that have taken place since the 1st Sept., including four troops of the 9th Light Dragoons, and the remains of the 23d regiment, together with the deaths, which fall little short of 1,600,

have caused a diminution of upwards of one-third of the force appointed for the defence of this island by lord Chatham, previous to his departure from hence; and when we take into calculation the 6,000 sick still remaining at Walcheren, our effective numbers, at a time that the enemy is obviously preparing his means of attack, have sunk to less than 4,000 men capable of taking the field.—I have judged it necessary to give your lordship these melancholy details, because, if it is intended, as it seems to be, to keep the island, it is my decided opinion that no time should be lost in sending reinforcements, the more especially as this is said to be the favourable season for such a measure.\* I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

No. XIII.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. Gen. sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburg, 23d October 1809.*

*Middleburg, 23d October 1809.*

My lord; I beg leave to transmit herewith, for your lordship's information, the copy of a letter from captain Seymour of his Majesty's ship *Pallas* to commodore Owen, containing some intelligence of the enemy's intention against the island, which there is good reason to suppose is founded on truth.—I cannot take a better opportunity than the present of calling your lordship's most serious attention to the precarious and critical situation of this island, weakened as it has been by the frequent embarkations of the sick for England, and by the mortality which has existed, and still continues to exist. I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

(Inclosure referred to in No. XIII.)

EXTRACT of a *Letter from Captain Seymour to Commodore Owen, dated Pallas, four o'clock Saturday, 21st October 1809.*

An inhabitant of this island returned to day from a village near Tergoes; he says, that every vessel and boat has been pressed for the purpose of conveying troops, and that they expect an attack will be immediately made on Walcheren; calculating upon the number we have sick, and thinking that delay would be more useful to our defensive than to their offensive operations.—One of the French princes (which the man does not know) is at Goes, at which and at Bergen-op-Zoom the greatest collection of the vessels are, and is, with the other leading officers, offering any inducement to the Dutch

soldiery to distinguish themselves in the attack: 15,000 French are hourly expected to reinforce them.—How true all these particulars are I will not answer for, but the man appears intelligent. He has been permitted to pass several times for the purpose of procuring supplies, and returns to night for another cargo, and promises to learn what he can of any further movements the enemy may have made.—I shall keep guard boats in advance during the night, and in thick weather in the Woolversdyke passage, as you directed. W. A. OTWAY.

No. XIV.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburg, 23d October 1809.*

My Lord; I am again to address your lordship on the still increasing sickness of the troops; which is the more to be lamented, as this should by all accounts be the healthy season of the year. The three weeks of clear fine weather which we lately enjoyed have, however, had no visible beneficial consequences.—There has been an actual increase of 300 sick during the last week; and, notwithstanding the diminution in our hospitals of upwards of 4,000 patients sent to England, the deaths have remained, during that period, at 128. This is a discouraging circumstance; and rendered still more so, as we cannot flatter ourselves with any immediate change for the better. The deaths yesterday were 21.—The convalescents do not gain ground, but, on the contrary, many of them relapse, and are carried off. It is also much feared, that the experiment lately tried of sending a proportion of the convalescents on board hospital ships will ultimately fail. Of one fact the medical officers are positive, and that is, that we cannot reasonably expect any service from the convalescents for two or three months after their discharge from the hospital.—The only alternative we have is therefore to send them to England; but, according to that plan, we shall soon be left destitute of soldiers; although I agree it is preferable to have none, than to have them here unfit for service and unlikely to recover.—Amidst all these difficulties, it will be a consolation to your lordship to learn, as it is a satisfaction to me to declare, that the attention of the medical officers, under the able and zealous superintendence of Doctor McGregor, inspector of hospitals, has been most unremitting and praiseworthy. I have, &c.

EYRE COOTE.

No. XV.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote to Viscount Castlereagh, dated Middleburgh, 23d October 1809.*

My Lord; I have to acknowledge lord Liverpool's letter of the 18th instant, enclosing the copy of one from lieut. col. Cornens to Mr. Cooke, stating strongly sir David Dundas's objections to the measure of sending to Walcheren 300 of one of the Royal Veteran Battalions, to be employed as orderlies in the hospitals; and trusting that the necessity has been completely obviated by my having recurred to the employment of the inhabitants in the hospitals.—And I beg to state to your lordship, that although I agree perfectly in opinion with the Commander in Chief, as to the general impolicy, and seeming impropriety of employing old and meritorious soldiers in the capacity of hospital orderlies; yet I cannot but regret, that in the present unexampled and distressing situation of the troops in this island, the proposal did not meet with his approbation.—The want of the number of orderlies applied for by my letter of the 6th inst. has, I am sorry to inform your lordship, by no means been obviated by the hire of ten native pioneers per regiment, they being scarcely sufficient to perform the fatiguing duties of the corps, much less capable of attending upon 4 or 500 patients, which is the proportion of sick in many regiments.—Your lordship will also be pleased to take into consideration that the 400 inhabitants employed by us, as stated in my letter of the 6th instant, are hired solely as workmen for the pressing repairs of the barracks and fortifications at Flushing and Veere. They have consequently nothing to do with the hospitals, which were frequently much distressed by the want of orderlies, and it should be recollected that every man we employ as orderly in an hospital is a valuable soldier taken from our small effective force. I have, &c.

(Signed) EYRE COOTE.

P. S. Several regiments have not been able notwithstanding every exertion, to procure their ten native pioneers. It would therefore be useless to attempt to increase the number now allowed. E. C.

No. XVI.—DISPATCH from *General Sir Eyre Coote to Lord Viscount Castlereagh, dated 27th Oct. 1809.*

My Lord; I am to acquaint your lordship, that lieut. gen. Don arrived here to  
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relieve me on the 24th instant, and that I propose resigning the command into his hands on the 29th of this month.—Previous to taking that measure, I have thought it expedient to make further embarkations of upwards of 1,600 sick and convalescents for England, which will be completed on Thursday the 31st instant; and I have recommended to general Don, to pursue the system I have adopted of sending home as many of the convalescents as possible, it being fully ascertained, that their stay in this country subjects them to repeated relapses, and is not productive of any permanent recovery.—After all these embarkations, our hospitals will still contain upwards of 4,000 sick, the greater part of whom it will be highly advisable to remove to England, as to a place of security; for I will not conceal from your lordship, that in the event of the enemy's landing in the island, our hospitals (those at Veere and Flushing excepted) must be abandoned to him; the trifling force that now remains, having no other alternative in such a case than to retire upon those two places. I have, &c. EYRE COOTE.

D:

DISPATCHES FROM LIEUT. GENERAL DON.

No. I.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool.*

*Middleburgh, 27th Oct. 1809.*

My lord; I have been shewn by lieut. general sir Eyre Coote the principal military points of this island, and I hope in a few days to be able to make my report thereon.—I have since visited the hospitals, and feel it my indispensable duty not to lose one moment in strongly recommending, that ships for 5,638 sick may instantly be sent to convey them to England.—The sick this day, for whom no conveyance has yet been provided, amount to 4,378, and notwithstanding the utmost exertions which may be made, I calculate that the number will increase to 5,638, before ships can arrive here for their removal.—I have obtained my information respecting the sick of this army from the following sources, *viz.* from lieut. general sir Eyre Coote; from the principal officers of the medical department; from the staff and regimental surgeons; and, in the hospitals, from the attendants on the sick. On this head I have consequently every reason to believe that my information is

(E)

correct; and much do I lament to report that there is not a chance of a single man now in the hospital or convalescent ever recovering sufficiently to undergo the duties of a soldier in the field, unless he be removed from this island in a short time.—I must also mention that of the men stated in the returns as fit for duty, more than one third are incapable of a rapid march of five miles, or of one night's patrolling duty.—I have further to report that if the enemy should force our line of ships of war and armed vessels from Terveere to Rammekins, the sick would inevitably fall into the hands of the enemy.—Under these very distressing circumstances I most earnestly solicit, that orders may instantly be given for the sending of vessels here from the nearest ports in England, sufficient for the conveyance of 5,638 sick; and I indulge a hope, that these orders may be followed up through the several departments by some responsible person, to insure their due and prompt execution. I request your lordship's pardon for this paragraph; but when the lives of British soldiers are at stake, it is the duty of their general to suggest every means to save them.—I have, &c.

GEORGE DON, Lieut. Gen.

P. S.—The rank and file fit for duty this day amount to 4,534, and from that number must be deducted the attendants on the sick, and many others who in all armies never appear under arms; besides, as I have already observed, one third is incapable of considerable exertions. G. D.

No. 2.—DISPATCH from Lieut. Gen. Don to the Earl of Liverpool.

Walcheren, 29th Oct. 1809.

My Lord; I had the honour to receive your lordship's letter of the 24th instant on the night of the 27th, and I lost no time in calling upon the chief engineer to report to me how far it was practicable to destroy the basin of Flushing and the naval defences of this island; and also to report to me, for the information of his Majesty's government, in how short a space of time these objects could severally be accomplished, and what permanent effect such destruction would have on the towns and island of Walcheren.—I have the honour to lay before your lordship the commanding engineer's report on these points, by which your lordship will perceive that, in the space of two days, the basin of Flushing and all the coast defences

of the island can be effectually destroyed as far as may be done without hazarding an inundation of the island or of the town of Flushing, and that in six days the total demolition of the coast defences may be effected; but which measure would involve the loss of the town of Flushing, and most probably the greater part of the island.—In compliance with your lordship's further instructions desiring my opinion in the event of its being determined on by his majesty's government to evacuate this island, what length of time it would take, at this season of the year, to complete the evacuation on the two suppositions of the naval defences being destroyed, or of their being left in their present condition; I have, under these heads, to report to your lordship, that I am of opinion, in the event of the basin of Flushing and inferior coast defences being destroyed, so as not to hazard any inundation, which will scarcely cause a difference in the period required for the evacuation, it will require fourteen days; but if the total destruction of the coast defences is to be carried into effect, thereby causing the demolition of the town of Flushing and probable loss of the greater part of the island, in such case the period necessary for evacuating of the island must be extended to 20 days, as all the sick and stores must be removed previously to the commencement of the destruction of such defences.—I most strongly recommend to your lordship, that should his Majesty's government deem it expedient to order the evacuation of this island, that the naval force from the Veere Gat to Fort Rammekins should be very considerably increased, and the most positive and strict injunction given to the officers commanding the men of war and armed vessels on that line of coast, to hold their positions at all risks until the evacuation of the island shall be completed, and until the whole of the men of war with troops on board, as well as the transports, are beyond and clear of the Flemish banks.—Should the above line of coast be neglected, the most fatal consequences might ensue to the sick, to the army, and even to the ships of war stationed off Flushing, for without a leading wind it is almost impracticable for vessels to get to sea, and should the enemy get possession of Flushing and of the coast from the Rammekins to West Cappel, the situation of the fleet, locked up by adverse winds, would become extremely precarious. L

is true, the force here is yet sufficient to hold the town of Flushing until the enemy opens his mortar and ricochet batteries, but it is wholly out of the question to cope with the enemy in the field; consequently the coast from the Rammekins to within a mile and a half of Flushing on the left, and from Zouteland to West Cap-pel on the right, would instantly fall into his hands, and give him strong positions to erect batteries against our shipping. Under these circumstances therefore I must again call your lordship's particular attention to direct the naval force between Veere Gat and Fort Rammekins to be greatly augmented, as upon the marine defence of that line the safe evacuation of this island solely depends, because I consider the remaining part of the coast will be perfectly secure, so long as our line of battle ships remain in the Flushing Roads, and that our heavy frigates keep their stations so as to preclude an attack from this, and the Cadsand side on the westward, and from Schowen on the eastward.—Your lordship may rely that the greatest secrecy shall be observed, and I think it proper to mention that I have communicated your lordship's dispatch only to lieutenant general sir Eyre Coote and the commanding engineer, from both of whom I have of course derived every necessary information.—I cannot conclude this letter, without mentioning to your lordship, that from the returns before me, it appears that a very large supply of valuable stores are now on this island, which will of course be taken into consideration, should the measure of withdrawing the army be determined on, as to the necessary allotment of shipping. I have, &c. &c.

GEO. DON, Lieut. General.

P. S. When your lordship takes the above into consideration, I beg leave to refer you to my dispatch of the 27th inst. as by that means you will be in full possession of the present deplorable state of the army.

(Inclosure referred to in No. II.)

*Middleburg, 28th Oct. 1809.*

Sir; I have on the points that you did me the honour to entrust to my consideration this day, to report as follows; That in the space of two days the basin of Flushing, and all the coast defences of Walcheren can be effectually destroyed, so far as may be done without hazarding an inundation of the island or of the town of Flushing. The reservation I make has

reference principally to the sea lines of Flushing, as forming a part of the coast defences, the demolition of which might extend the period to six days; but, in destroying these works, as they serve also to protect and secure the town against the higher tides, the total loss of the town may be involved, more especially so if the sea walls be demolished at this season of the year, and several months must elapse before any effectual measures can be taken to resist the influx and probable devastation of the sea.—I have, &c.

ROBERT PILKINGTON,

Lieut. Col. Commanding  
Lieut. Gen. Don, Royal Engineers.  
Commander in Chief, &c. &c.

No. III.—A DISPATCH from Lieut. General  
Don to the Earl of Liverpool.

*Head Quarters, Middleburg,  
3d Nov. 1809.*

My lord; In my letter of the 27th ult. I acquainted your lordship that in the course of a few days I should make my military Report on the state of this island.—I now find that my Report on the actual and present state of the island may be confined to a few words:—That the island is almost in a defenceless state, and that the army is so much reduced, as not to be able to cope with the enemy in the field; and only capable of holding the town of Flushing until the enemy can open mortars and ricochet batteries against it.—With respect to a plan for the permanent defence of this island, I have the honour to submit to your lordship's consideration the inclosed Report thereon.—I have, &c.

GEO. DON, Lieut. General.

(Inclosure referred to in No. III.)

REPORT ON THE ISLAND OF WALCHEREN.

This island is 34 miles in circumference (including St. Joostland), of a circular form, and is situated between the mouths of the East and West Scheldt. The whole coast is assailable. The south west and north line of coast extending from Flushing to the Veer Gat, can for eight months in the year be protected by a naval force, but the marine defence of the coast from the Veer Gat to the Rammekins is not to be depended upon, as the anchorage for frigates and armed vessels is within the range of the enemy's fire from South Beveland and Wolversdyke, and North Beveland; and further, the marine defence of the whole coast for nearly four months in the year cannot be relied upon, as the ships

must quit their anchorage as soon as the ice begins to float.—Three-fourths of the coast is inclosed by the enemy's shore; viz. by Cadsand on the south, South Beveland and Wolversdyke on the east, North Beveland and Schowen on the north east, and the coast between the Rammekins and the Veer Gat is within the range of the enemy's fire, as has already been mentioned.—This island may be attacked from the following points; viz. Sluys, the West Scheldt, passage between South Beveland, Wolversdyke, passage between the Wolversdyke and North Beveland, the East Scheldt, and also from Ostend and Helvoetsluys.—To place this island in a strength of defence, the towns of Flushing and Ter Veer must be fortified, strong martello towers, armed with heavy artillery, must be built on the coast, with batteries constructed under their protection, and military stations established, with communications for field artillery, between each.—The present works of the town of Flushing must be thoroughly repaired, and the defences increased, the flanks greatly strengthened, the ditches deepened, and casemates for at least 3,500 men constructed; powder magazines, bomb-proof hospitals, and storehouses must also be built.—The town of Ter Veer must be put into a state of defence in a similar manner, with this difference, that casemates for 1,500 men will be sufficient, with powder magazines, bomb-proof hospitals, and storehouses in proportion.

The following towers must be constructed, viz. one for 5 heavy guns at Vycheter battery; one for 3 ditto at Nolle House; one for 5 ditto at the French new work, called by the English the Black Battery; one for 3 ditto at the Polder Zind Watering; one for 5 ditto at the Rammekins; three for 3 guns each on the south east coast of the island of St. Joostland; one for 5 guns at Cape Armuyden; two for 3 guns each between Cape Armuyden and Ter Veere; two for 3 guns each between Ter Veere and the Veere Gat; one for 5 guns at Den Haake; three for 3 guns each on the Bree Sands and Domburgh; three for 3 guns each from Domburgh to West Cappel, and four from West Cappel to Vycheter battery and for the further defence of Flushing; one for 3 guns at Konkirke Windmill; one for ditto at West Zonburg; one for ditto at East Zonburg; one for ditto at Ruttem. The four last mentioned towers are intended for the out-posts from Flushing,

and may be considered in the first instance as the boundary of the Flushing inundation, by cutting the dyke under the fire of the town, for it is calculated that it will require five or six days to inundate the country as far as the line of the said towers, consequently, it becomes an object of great importance to hold the said line until the inundation rises to that height, which would preclude the enemy from advancing beyond the said chain of posts.—The present ditches across this part of the country might in some degree be formed into a canal extending from tower to tower, and by raising a bank on the inward side, the Flushing inundation might be confined within the semicircle formed by the said chain of towers. At each of the towers (with the exception of the four last mentioned) a powerful battery ought to be constructed, at a distance from the tower of 100 to 150 yards, according to the nature of the ground. Block ships, armed with 24-pounders, will add much to the marine defence of the coast between the Rammekins and Ter Veere, particularly in the vicinity of the Rammekins and Cape Armuyden.

Military stations to be established at the following points: At Flushing, for one brigade of artillery, one troop of cavalry, and 300 infantry; at the Rammekins, for one brigade of field artillery, half a troop of cavalry, and 2,000 infantry; at the Salient Point of St. Joostland, towards St. Joostland, one brigade of field artillery, half a troop of cavalry, and 2,000 infantry; at Cape Armuyden, for two brigades of field artillery, half a troop of cavalry and 3,000 infantry; at Ter Veere, one brigade of field artillery, half a troop of cavalry, and 2,000 infantry; at Point Den Haake, Domburgh, West Cappel, and St. Joostland, for one brigade of field artillery, half a troop of cavalry, and 1,000 infantry; at Middleburg, for two brigades of field artillery, two troops of cavalry, and 5,000 infantry.

Military communications must be formed from station to station, along the dykes and from Middleburg; as follows, viz. To Flushing (already made) Rattem and Rammekins, along the right bank of the Middleburg canal to the Junction of St. Joostland creek, and from thence to the Rammekins. From the said Junction across the island of St. Joostland to the Salient Point. Along the left bank of the Middleburg canal to the Saw Mills Armuyden, and cape Armuyden. To Cle-

versinke and the dyke about halfway between cape Armuyden and Ter Veere. To Ter Veere (already made) to St. Lorens and Scrooskinke, with a branch to Den Haake, and another to Domburg. To Gryspirke and West Cappel, Konkirke and Zouteland. All these communications must be formed so as to admit of car artillery moving at the rate of six miles an hour.

The land force requisite for the permanent defence of the island will be nearly as follow: 12 brigades of field artillery. 200 artillery men for the garrison of Flushing. 100 ditto for Ter Veere. 250 ditto for the Towers. 400 ditto for the coast and batteries. 7 Troops of cavalry. 21,000 infantry, making in all a force of 23,150 men. With the above force and arrangement, this island may be considered as inassailable; at all events capable of a most obstinate defence.

(Signed) GEORGE DON, Lieut. Gen.

*Head Quarters, Middleburg,  
Nov. 3d, 1809.*

NO. IV.—DISPATCH from Lieut. Gen. Don to the Earl of Liverpool, dated 3d Nov. 1809.—Received 8th Nov.

*Middleburgh, 3d Nov. 1809.*

My lord; I beg leave to acquaint your lordship, that from the intelligence I have received, it appears that the army at Antwerp, and cantoned in the vicinity of that town, amount to about 22,600 men, and in South Beveland, to 7,000 men; the former is composed chiefly of French Troops, and the latter of Dutch.—Additional strong batteries have been constructed and armed on both banks of the West Scheldt, from Antwerp down to Batz.—In South Beveland there is a strong battery completed on the Boiscelen Point; One battery for eleven guns or three mortars has been constructed at Crayest, but not yet armed; this battery will command the east entrance of the Slow Passage, and the island of St. Joostland is within its range. Another battery has been constructed to command the west entrance of the Slow Passage, but has not as yet been armed. The enemy continue daily to augment his flotilla, and to prepare fire vessels. I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE DON, Lieut. Gen.

P. S. On the 29th, two battalions (1,000 each) of French imperial guards marched into Antwerp, from which circumstance it is presumed that Buonaparté is soon expected there.

NO. V.—(Secret and Confidential.) DISPATCH from Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool, dated 4th Nov. 1809.—Received 8th Nov.

*Head Quarters Middleburg,  
4th Nov. 1809.*

My lord; Your lordship's dispatch of the 27th ultimo, only reached me last night, and I early this morning waited on rear admiral Otway, and in strict confidence, communicated to him the contents of your letter.—By my dispatch to your lordship of the 29th ult. you will perceive that I shall have no difficulty in accomplishing the destruction of the bason of Flushing, and the other naval resources of the island, without involving the loss of the town of Flushing, or inundating any considerable part of the island.—I do not conceive that the small reinforcement mentioned in your lordship's dispatch, would prove any important advantage, because the retention of this island in its present state, must solely depend upon the protection afforded by the navy.—Notwithstanding the very reduced state of the army, yet I deem it sufficient to hold the town of Flushing, until batteries are opened against it, and with the addition of 4 or 5,000 men, I could not in the present defenceless state of the island attempt to cope with the enemy in the field. It is true, with that augmentation of force, I could, as long as the armed ships keep their anchorage from Ter Veer to the Rammekins, dispute the landing of the enemy, and arrest for some considerable time his progress across the island to Flushing; but my dispatch of yesterday will shew your lordship that permanently to keep possession of this island, a very great force, and a very extended arrangement are necessary.—I therefore humbly conceive, that if his Majesty's government should deem it expedient to order the evacuation of the island, it will be better not to send the reinforcement mentioned in your lordship's letter, provided that the evacuation takes place immediately; but if time is given to the enemy to increase and arm their batteries in South Beveland, and to construct batteries in the Wolversdyke and North Beveland, for the purpose of driving our armed vessels from the stations between Ter Veere and the Rammekins, and also time for their augmenting their army and flotilla in this neighbourhood, then and in that case, a reinforcement of 4 or 5,000 men might be desira-



ble, but which force I should not disembark until the operations of the enemy compelled me so to do.—This reinforcement must of course be sent in ships of war, as at the present season of the year, their conveyance in transports cannot be depended upon, nor are they in other respects calculated to afford that prompt assistance I might require.—With regard to the preservation of the island in general, that must solely depend upon the operations of the enemy; at all events your lordship may rest assured, that I shall be extremely careful not to inflict any wanton injury on the inhabitants, but I must at the same time acquaint your lordship, that should I perceive the smallest indication of the naval defence being withdrawn from the Slow passage, and from the channel between Cape Armuyden and the Veere Gat, I shall instantly inundate the whole country between Ter Veere and Armuyden, and also the whole country in the front of Flushing; as it is by that means alone, when unsupported by the marine defence of the above mentioned line, that I can carry off the sick, remove the stores, and evacuate the island with security to the army. I have, &c.

GEORGE DON, Lieut. Gen.

No. VI.—DISPATCH from Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool, dated Middleburg, 7th Nov. 1809.

My Lord; I had yesterday afternoon the honour of receiving your lordship's letter of the 4th inst. and agreeable to your lordship's instructions I directed lieut. col. Pilkington to report to me for your information what degree of destruction the sea lines of Flushing, as stated in his letter to me, would further prevent the enemy's fleet from having the advantage of Flushing as a naval station, whether such destruction would materially obstruct or retard the re-establishment of the bason, and what would be the additional extent of the mischief which would occur therefrom to the island and its inhabitants.—I enclose col. Pilkington's report on these points; and make no doubt, from the clear explanation he has given, it will prove satisfactory to your lordship in every respect.—With regard to the destruction of the bason of Flushing or any of the naval defences of the island, I humbly conceive that it will be better to defer the execution until the fleet actually arrives for the removal of the army and stores, as such a measure must unavoidably

occasion alarm to the inhabitants, and be communicated to the enemy in a few hours. By col. Pilkington's former report your lordship will perceive that the destruction of the bason, and what he further had in contemplation, may be effected in a very short time, and as this operation can be accomplished at the same moment that the embarkation of the stores is carrying on, no time will be lost, and I shall then also of course lay an embargo on vessels of every description, which at present it would be impolitic to do.—I shall without delay make all the necessary preparations for the destruction of the bason, &c. and for the evacuation of the island; and I am happy to acquaint your lordship that I can do this without creating the smallest suspicion of the intended measure.—At present I am much occupied in fortifying with field works the flanks of the towns of Flushing and Terveere, and also the line of coast between Terveere and Armuyden; the expence will be very trifling, and in case of any mischance happening to our armed vessels on that line of coast, I shall reap much security from the said works in retiring across the island of Flushing.—I must, however, entreat your lordship's attention to the marine defence between Terveere and the Rammekins; as although my efforts have some effect, yet from the very reduced state of the army, my chief dependance is on the navy.—I shall lose no time in embarking a proportion of sick on board a division of transports that have just arrived, and I shall, without delay, take measures for sending to England all the store ships and provision vessels which can at present be spared.—I have, &c.

Geo. Don.  
Lieut. General.

(Inclosure referred to in No. VI.)

*Middleburg, 7th Nov. 1809.*

Sir; In obedience of your commands to report in what degree the destruction of the sea lines of Flushing would prevent the enemy's fleet from having the advantage of Flushing as a naval station, and whether such destruction would materially obstruct and retard the re-establishment of the bason, and what would be the additional extent of the mischief which might occur thereby to the island of Walcheren and its inhabitants, I have the honour to offer as my opinion, that the dismantling the batteries on the sea lines, together with the destruction of their parapets and a partial demolition of the line

of rampart, more especially on each side of the entrances into the harbours, would effectually deprive the enemy for a time of the advantage of Flushing as a naval station, and that such destruction would most materially distress the enemy, likewise retard and obstruct the re-establishment of the bason, and all other services connected with the place as a naval station and depot.—That any farther demolition than has been stated, would expose the town of Flushing and the greater part of the island of Walcheren to an inundation, destructive to the town, the island, and inhabitants of both.—I have, &c.

(Signed) ROB. PILKINGTON,  
Lieut. Col. Royal Engineer.

*Lieut. General Don, &c. &c. &c.*

No. VII.—(*Secret.*)—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool*, dated 13th Nov. 1809.

*Head Quarters, Middleburgh,*  
13th Nov. 1809.

My lord; I have just had the honour to receive your lordship's dispatch of the 9th inst. acknowledging my letter of the 3d and 4th of this month.—I am happy to find that between 4 or 5,000. tons of shipping have sailed from Harwich and the Downs, for the conveyance of sick from this island, and that an equal number of transports are preparing to sail without delay; this tonnage will, I trust, enable me to remove all the sick, and also the worst cases amongst the convalescents.—There will then remain 5,200 persons composing this army to be removed, and for whom men of war and transports must be provided.—With respect to stores, I conceive that 2,500 tonnage will also be wanted, and that horse ships for 700 horses must likewise be sent.—I perceive by the tenor of your lordship's dispatch, that some considerable time will yet elapse before the means are given for the complete evacuation of this island, and I think it therefore very advisable that the 1,800 men from the Sussex district, and who I conclude are now in the Downs, should be sent here without a moment's delay.—I shall not disembark this force, but on its arrival, shall station it partly off Fort Rammekins, and partly off Ter Veer, so that I may be enabled to avail myself of it, at a moment's notice, should any operations on the part of the enemy render its debarkation expedient.—Since my dispatch of the 3d Nov. the enemy has considerably increased his flotilla, and 12,000 men

are certainly expected at Antwerp on the 18th inst.; it will be therefore advisable to hold in readiness, the remainder of the reinforcement mentioned in your lordship's dispatch of the 27th ult.—I am very happy to find that a proportion of artificers are to be sent here, as they may be usefully employed on the service for which they are intended; on their arrival, I shall keep them on board, until it may be judged expedient to begin the destruction of the bason of Flushing and naval defence of the island.—I have, &c.

GEORGE DON, Lieut. Gen.

P. S. I have this moment received a letter from rear admiral Otway, most strongly advising, that the division from Sussex should proceed without delay to the Roompot.

G. D.

No. VIII.—A DISPATCH from *Lieut. Gen. Don to the Earl of Liverpool*, dated *Middleburgh*, 16th Nov. 1809.

My Lord; I have had the honour to receive your lordship's dispatch of 13th inst. (marked Most Secret) signifying to me his Majesty's commands, that I am to evacuate the island of Walcheren with the forces under my orders; but I am at the same time to observe, that it is the determination of his Majesty, that previous to the evacuation, I should take such measures as I may judge most effectual for the destruction of the bason of Flushing and of the naval defences of the island.—I beg leave to acquaint your lordship that this measure has already been fully considered by the officers to whom it relates, and that every arrangement shall be made without delay for its execution. It is agreed upon by the admiral and myself, that the work in question shall be begun the moment that sufficient transports arrive for the removal of the sick.—I am fully aware at the present season of the year of the great importance of making every exertion to bring this service to a conclusion; and your lordship may rely on every effort being made by the navy and army to that end. I have, &c.

GEO. DON, Lieut. Gen.

No. IX.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool*, dated 22d Nov. 1809.

*Head Quarters, Middleburgh,*  
22d Nov. 1809.

My lord; I have the satisfaction of acquainting your lordship that the brigade from Sussex arrived here last night, as

likewise four ships of war and fifty transports. On the preceding day eleven transports arrived from Harwich, so that I hope in the course of a few days all the sick and convalescents will be removed, and which will enable me to carry into execution your lordship's secret instructions. I have, &c. GEO. DON.

P. S. I find that one transport having a detachment of the 51st regiment on board was left in the Downs.

No. X.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool, dated Middleburgh, 27th Nov. 1809.*

My lord; I have the satisfaction to acquaint your lordship, that the last of the sick and convalescents belonging to the army in this island were yesterday embarked.—The frigate built in the dock yard at Flushing was launched on Thursday night, and was yesterday afternoon got out of the bason, and which circumstance enabled me this morning to commence the demolition of the dock yard and bason.—I hope the whole of this work, together with the destruction of the sea defences, will be completed in the present week, and that the embarkation of the army may commence on Sunday next; but this last measure, of course, will not be carried into execution until the weather is in some degree settled, and the wind favourable. The enemy has continued his preparations for our attack, and has this day sent a reinforcement of 1,500 men into North Beveland. I have, &c. GEORGE DON. Lieut. Gen.

No. XI.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool, dated, Head Quarters, Middleburgh, 5th Dec. 1809.*

My lord; In my letter of the 27th ult. I acquainted your lordship that I was in hopes the army might embark as this day; but I am now sorry to state that the commanding engineer finds the works at Flushing more difficult than he at first expected, and that he will not be able to complete it before Thursday next; consequently the army will not embark until the day following, should the wind and weather then prove favourable.—The enemy continues his preparations for an attack, and has brought down an immense train of heavy artillery to the north west coast of South Beveland, and to the Woolversdyke, for the purpose of driving our flotilla from the Sloo and Woolversdyke passages; but his batteries, although in

forwardness, are not yet armed.—On the night of the 1st inst. the boats of the advanced squadron in the West Scheldt cut out three schuyts from the harbour of Wedenskyrkin loaded with ten iron 36 pounders, and eight brass 18 pounders, with the carriages complete for the latter, and some timber for platforms. I have, &c. GEORGE DON, Lieut. Gen.

No. XII.—DISPATCH from *Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool, Head Quarters, Middleburgh, 5th Dec. 1809.*

My lord; On the 3d inst. I had the honour of acquainting your lordship, that the works at Flushing would be completed on Thursday the 7th inst.; but by the enclosed copy of a letter from col. Pilkington your lordship will perceive that the explosion of the mines therein mentioned cannot take place until Saturday morning.—I shall hold the army in readiness to embark on that day, and should the wind prove favourable, the fleet will sail on the following morning. I earnestly hope that this may be the case, as I find that the tide will not admit of the line of battle ships passing through the Doûrloo after Monday, until the 18th inst. The enemy has yesterday and this day very considerably augmented his working parties employed on the batteries in South Beveland and the Woolversdyke. I have, &c. GEORGE DON.

(Inclosure referred to in No. XII.)  
LETTER from *Lieut. Col. Pilkington to Lieut. General Don. Dated Flushing, 5th Dec. 1809.*

Sir; I have the honour to communicate to you, that of the eight principal galleries now arriving in the piers of the flood gates of the bason at this place, four of them will this evening be driven home, the remaining four, from the hands employed in them being unaccustomed to such a peculiar service, are in arrears, but the good men now being turned into them will, from the best opinion I can form, be completed on Thursday night.—It will be expedient to appropriate one day to the charging of the mines and stopping the galleries, therefore Saturday morning may be calculated on as the period for the explosion to take place.—In the event of any deviation from the present plan being deemed necessary, it will be desirable to have 48 hours notice, in order to make such other arrangements as appears best to produce the desired ef-

fect; but still any other plan than is now pursuing, will, from the peculiar construction of the piers and other abutments, be doubtful in its operation.—I have, &c.

ROBERT PILKINGTON,  
Lieut. Col. R. Engineers.

**No. XIII.**—DISPATCH from Lieut. General Don to the Earl of Liverpool, dated, On board his Majesty's Ship *Cesar* off the Duerlo Passage, 23d Dec. 1809.

My lord; Although I have regularly communicated to your lordship the principal circumstances which have occurred relative to the army under my command, yet I have judged it advisable to postpone my detailed Report on the evacuation of the island of Walcheren until the troops were withdrawn, and the fleet had sailed.—On the receipt of your lordship's dispatch of the 13th of last month, conveying to me his Majesty's commands to evacuate the island of Walcheren with the force under my orders, and further signifying the determination of his Majesty, that previously to the evacuation I should take such measures as I should deem most effectual for the demolition of the basin of Flushing, and the naval defences of the island; I made the necessary preparations for the removal of the sick and convalescents of the army, and the arrival of a division of transports afforded me the means of completing their embarkation on the 26th ultimo.—On the same day the new frigate that was built in the dock yard, was got out of the basin, and which enabled me on the following morning to commence the demolition of the sea defences, basin, dock yard, arsenal, magazines, naval store houses, &c. of the town of Flushing, the total destruction of which was completed on the 11th instant.—These services were conducted under the immediate direction and superintendence of lieutenant-colonel Pilkington, commanding engineer, assisted by a strong party from the navy under the command of captain Moore, and for the particulars I beg leave to refer your lordship to the lieutenant-colonel's report, copy of which I enclose.—The very judicious and skilful manner in which these measures have been completed, reflects great credit upon lieutenant colonel Pilkington and the several officers who acted with him, and I am persuaded it will afford your lordship peculiar satisfaction to know that the whole of this extensive work has been accomplished without any

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injury being done to the inhabitants, the destruction not having extended beyond what was necessary to deprive the enemy of the advantage of Flushing as a naval station.—The embarkation of the ordnance and the stores of the several departments having been completed, the army was withdrawn and embarked on the 9th instant, but the weather being extremely unsettled, and conceiving it probable from the active and continued preparations of the enemy, that he might hazard an attack, I judged it expedient still to hold the towns of Flushing, Middleburg, and Ter Veere and fort Rammekins, at the same time I made an arrangement for the disembarkation of the army, the four divisions of which were stationed as follows, viz. The 1st division immediately off the town of Flushing: the 2d to the westward of that town: the 3d between Flushing and Fort Rammekins, to act and co-operate with the naval force on the Slough passage under captain Mason: and the 4th off Ter Veere with the naval force between the Veere Gat and the Wolversdyke under commodore Owen.—By this disposition, had the enemy attempted to invade the island, the four posts above mentioned could easily have been reinforced, and the enemy in the event of his effecting a landing attacked in his flanks and rear, as from the precautions I had taken in stopping the fresh water sluices, his advance into the country must have been confined to the dykes and causeway from Ter Veere through Middleburg to Flushing.—The fleet continued wind-bound until this morning, when the rear guards were withdrawn, the ships of war and transports from the West Scheldt got underweigh, and I conclude those in the Veere Gat moved about the same time.—I feel great satisfaction in mentioning the very able and cordial support I have uniformly received from rear admiral Otway, and that our arrangements for the final evacuation of the island were approved of by rear admiral sir R. Strachan, on his arrival on the 11th instant. I cannot conclude the report without acquainting your lordship that I found the army in an excellent state of discipline, and that the conduct of the troops has in every respect merited my warmest approbation. On the day of embarkation the different corps of the army marched from the several points, and embarked in the most perfect order and regularity; and the magistrates of the towns

(F)

and villages expressed to the officers left in the command of the rear guards, that the troops on their departure had, in no instance, molested or injured the inhabitants. I have, &c. &c. G. Don, L. G.

(Inclosure in No. XIII.)

*Flushing, 11th December 1809.*

Sir; In obedience to your orders of the 25th ult., and with the concurrence of captain Moore of the Royal Navy, the necessary directions were given to commence on the demolition of the bason, arsenal, dock yard, naval defences and magazines of this place, and on the 26th a party of seamen under the superintendence of captain Tomlinson, began at low water to destroy such parts of the break waters as appeared to protect the entrance of the harbour; on the following day captain Moore with parties of seamen proceeded on the destruction of the wharfing of the bason, and of the dock yard, and both were accomplished in a few days, in the most effectual manner.—The demolition of the sea defences was also began upon on the 26th ult. under the immediate superintendence of captain Rudyerd of the royal engineers, assisted by captain Read with a detachment of officers and men of the royal staff corps.—Arrangements were on the same day made to proceed on the demolition by mining of the piers and masonry of the flood gates at the entrance of the great naval bason, under the direction of capt.

Squires and Fanshaw of the royal engineers.—I have now the honour to inform you that the services allotted to the royal navy have been most effectually accomplished, the dock yards, arsenal, magazines and every building belonging to the naval establishment, being wholly destroyed, the entrance of the harbour is also blocked up by sinking of vessels filled with heavy materials, so as to render the passage for ships of war impracticable.—The destruction of the defences towards the sea under the direction of captain Rudyerd, has also been completely carried into effect by dismantling the batteries, throwing down the parapets and in every respect extending the devastation of such works as far as could be accomplished without hazarding an inundation of the town; and with regard to the important service of the mines, employed as the means of destroying the piers and abutments of the flood gates which secured the bason, I have to acknowledge the skilful directions of captain Squires and Fanshaw, and the personal exertions of the other officers of the corps of royal engineers and assistant engineers employed under them, as the undertaking happily terminated in an explosion that succeeded in displacing the very foundations throughout the whole work. I have, &c. &c.

ROBERT PILKINGTON,

Lieut. Col. Royal Engineers.

*To Lt. General Don,*

*&c. &c. &c.*

*MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, taken before the Committee of the whole House, appointed to consider of the Policy and Conduct of the late EXPEDITION to the SCHELDT.*

**1.**

*Veneris, 2<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

The Right Hon. Sir DAVID DUNDAS, K. B.  
Commander in Chief of the Army,  
was called in. — Examined by the  
Committee.

At what time were you first made acquainted by his Majesty's ministers with their intention of sending an Expedition to the Scheldt?—It was on the 22nd of March that I was desired by lord Castlereagh to attend a cabinet that was to be held on the 24th at Burlington house. On

the 18th of March I had been appointed Commander in Chief.

What was the nature and substance of the communication made to you by lord visc. Castlereagh?—It was to attend the privy council upon the subject of a proposed Expedition to Walcheren, and an attack on the French Fleet there; that was the general information I had, and on that subject I was desired to attend to be asked a question by the council.

By the privy council you mean the cabinet?—I do.

Did you in consequence attend on the 24th?—I did.

Have the goodness to relate what passed between you and his Majesty's ministers on the 24th with respect to this Expedi-

tion?—I have a memorandum to that effect, which I will read if I may be permitted. The object was the propriety and possibility of an immediate attack on the island of Walcheren, and particularly on Flushing, and on the French fleet of nine or ten sail of the line, which was at that time in the harbour of that place not in a state to proceed to sea. The attempt was represented as from many considerations most desirable, for the navy had then a large disposable force, and also that it should be made within a short limited time, depending upon the tides; for it was to be apprehended that on the smallest alarm the enemy would withdraw their ships from Flushing, and carry them up the Scheldt to Antwerp. Fifteen or sixteen thousand land forces were considered as necessary for this operation, and I was desired to state whether such a force could at that time be assembled. This I was not then enabled to do in the affirmative.

[The witness was directed to withdraw. —The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 2.

*Luna, 5<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER, Bart. in the Chair.

The Right Hon. Sir David Dundas, K. B. Commander in Chief of the Army, was called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Have the goodness to proceed in stating what passed between you and his Majesty's ministers on the 24th, with respect to the Expedition?—After every previous enquiry and report which had been made from the commanding officers at the several stations of the troops, and from the well-known shattered situation of the army after the return of so large a portion of it from Spain, such a force could not then be provided; besides the very indifferent general state of health, there was not one of those corps which returned from Spain whose clothing, arms, accoutrements, and other parts of military equipment, were not in a most defective state, and required considerable time, under every exertion, to replace and repair.

Did any thing more pass between his Majesty's ministers and yourself at that time relative to the projected Expedition

to the Scheldt; and if there did, state what it was?—I recollect no debate or discussion taking place, or opinion being called for; general conversation might pass while I remained there. As I considered myself sent for to answer on a particular subject, I retired soon after that was done; and as I took no notes at that time, I have now no further recollection of what passed at that meeting.

Do you recollect at any other time since that period, being consulted relative to the expediency of an Expedition to the Scheldt?—I do not recollect upon the expediency, but I had a great deal of communication of course with the secretary of state after that, from that time, till the Expedition sailed; I mean that I never was called to a council or a meeting.

Was the Expedition suspended in consequence of the difficulties you have stated in procuring a sufficient force?—Upon my word I cannot say; it is not for me to judge of that.

When was there any fresh communication upon the same subject with you?—From the 24th of March to the 8th of May there appears to have been no peculiar communication on the subject of Walcheren from his Majesty's government; I mean official to me as Commander in Chief; but every exertion continued to be made and urged to the several corps to complete them for service.

What was the communication made to you on the 8th of May, and by whom?—On the 8th of May lord Castlereagh applied for the state of the infantry in England, and the date that each battalion might be considered as fit for service, and in a state for embarkation: on the 10th of May a return was transmitted to lord Castlereagh of all the battalions now in England, with the effective strength of each; on the 20th of May, lord Castlereagh desired the mode in which it would be proposed to brigade two corps, one of 25,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry, the other a reserve of 10,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry: on the 21st of May a scheme was transmitted to lord Castlereagh, specifying the battalions as they lay in districts for an army of 25,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry; that for the reserve was postponed; I was not enabled to do it then.

When was the next communication relative to the Expedition to the Scheldt?—On the 20th of May, lord Castlereagh requested my sentiments on the practicability of an attempt on the enemy's naval

establishment in the Scheldt, the extent of means it would require, and the mode by which it could best be carried into execution, for the consideration of his Majesty's ministers; on the 3d of June my Answer was transmitted on the above subject to lord Castlereagh.

Can you state the substance of your Answer to lord Castlereagh?—I have that Answer here, and also his lordship's Letter to me.

[Sir David Dundas delivered in a Letter from lord Castlereagh to himself; dated May 29, 1809; and his Answer, dated 3d June 1809, which were read.]

(Confidential.)

*Copy of a LETTER from Lord Castlereagh to the Commander in Chief.*

*Downing-street, 29th May, 1809.*

"Sir; The naval establishment which the enemy has created in the Scheldt has already led to the construction of not less than 20 sail of the line in different stages of equipment, and promises to receive at no distant period an extension in point of number of ships, and a solidity in point of defence, which must render it, as a maritime position, not only extremely formidable to the security of Great Britain, but still more invulnerable to attack. These considerations have long attracted the serious attention of his Majesty's government, and they feel it their duty to investigate with the formidable means, both naval and military, which his Majesty has at present at his disposal, how far it is possible to strike a blow against the enemy's naval resources in that quarter, including the destruction of their arsenal at Antwerp, and the ships of war stationed in different parts of the Scheldt between Antwerp and Flushing.—The extreme importance of this subject will, I am persuaded, induce you to give it your best attention, and I have to request that you will favour me with your sentiments for the consideration of his Majesty's ministers upon the practicability of such an attempt: upon the extent of means it would require, and the mode by which it could best be carried into execution.—The intelligence received from the northern parts of France, from Flanders, and from Holland, although not such as will enable me to furnish you with any precise statement of the enemy's force on that line, represents them as drained as low, if not lower than at any former period, of regular troops, and I apprehend it may be generally assumed, that we can never

expect to find the enemy more exposed or more assailable in that quarter; nor is it probable that Great Britain will ever have a larger disposable force applicable to such a service than at the present moment. I have, &c.

(Signed)

CASTLEREAGH."

(Copy.)

*PAPER transmitted (June 3rd) to Lord Castlereagh, in answer to his Letter of the 29th of May, 1809.*

"The object to be attained as stated, is a most important and desirable one, but the force we have to employ must be considered, and the difficulties and risks they have to encounter from the enemy's strength and advantages, must be well weighed.—Our utmost means may be reckoned at about 25 or 30,000 infantry, and 5 or 6,000 cavalry.—There appears to be two routes by which such an army might undertake to approach from the coast to Antwerp.—1st. From Ostend, or its neighbourhood, by a march of above one hundred miles through the country of Flanders, and by Alost, Vilvarde, and Malines.—2d. By naval and land operations within the Scheldt, and along that river to Antwerp; first occupying the islands of Walcheren and Sud Beveland, and probably the opposite banks of the Scheldt.—Every calculation or prospect of successful attack can only be foreseen and made on a knowledge of the relative situation and strength of the enemy's country, fortresses, and armed men that can be brought in defence of both. If the route of the army is therefore to be taken as in the first case, through Flanders, the country is known to be one of the most intricate in Europe for military operations, being every where intersected with deep running rivers, large canals, and considerable ditches and inclosures, at the same time that the passes and important points are guarded by fortresses and walled towns, the most inconsiderable of which are capable of making a resistance against an army scantily provided with siege artillery. Of the first class near this route are Nieuport, Ostend, Ghent, Oudenarde, Dendermond, Brussels, Malines. The progress of military operations in Flanders, from the difficulties of advance, are well known never to have been rapid.—With our state of preparation and numbers, an attempt by this first route of a rapid march through Flanders to arrive at Antwerp, would certainly be most singular, and perhaps with-

out example. For a very considerable fleet and army must arrive and anchor on a part of the enemy's coast, which is at all times flat, dangerous, and without bay or shelter of any kind, in order to land on the open beach (betwixt two of the enemy's fortresses) [Ostend, Nieuport] about 30,000 men, 7 or 8,000 horses, and a considerable artillery, and perhaps other carriages and horses, medical, commissariat and baggage, if means and circumstances allow: to give up all communication with their shipping, and to march immediately without tents, for no means of carrying them could be provided or depended on; without hospital equipment, with only a scanty supply of bread for a very few days, through an hostile country, most intricate and difficult in its nature, where the use of the canals could be so easily impeded, where the bridges which are numerous would be destroyed, where the enemy would immediately be in front, rear, and on both flanks, being enabled so to do from the situation of his strong garrison towns; where the sick and wounded must be abandoned, whenever they become so, from want of carriage; where necessity would soon induce rapine, plunder, and great loss; where if such an army was not sooner arrested in its progress, it must arrive after a march of above 100 miles, at its destined point, and before a great town (Antwerp) sufficiently fortified to require a regular siege, and which this army could not carry on, unless the exertions of the fleet, and of another considerable body of troops, had opened and ensured a communication by the Scheldt.—During such a march, had some of the defensible towns even opened their gates, it is evident such an army could not diminish its numbers by leaving garrisons to occupy them, and thereby attempting to keep up a communication with the original point of landing, where possibly a fortress (Ostend) may have been secured, but which fortress is not such a one as can effectually cover and secure the re-embarkation of a considerable corps. Supposing after such a march the main object of the expedition to have been attained in the destruction of the enemy's fleet, it is evident that the army could not calculate (from the time and force the enemy must have acquired) on returning by the same route, but must trust from the previous measures taken and its own exertions, to return (having accomplished its object) by the Scheldt.—If it therefore

appears that the advance through Flanders is attended with very great difficulties, and that at any rate a return by the Scheldt is the most expedient and eligible; it would follow also that the attack should be directed from that side, and be a combined naval and land operation, the detail of which must be well considered and arranged by both services.—In whatever way Antwerp is to be approached or taken, the service is one of very great risk, and in which the safe return of the army so employed may be very precarious, from the opposition made, and the length of time consumed in the operation, which enables the enemy to assemble in a short time a great force from every part of the Netherlands and Holland, and even from Westphalia by the course of the Rhine, as well as from the frontier of France.

D. DUNDAS."

3d June 1809, *Horse Guards.*

Are you in possession of the opinions of other officers given upon the same subject?—Yes, I am in possession of four opinions: I have them not here.

Whose opinions were they?—Of the adjutant general, the quarter master general, the deputy quarter master general, and of colonel Gordon, who is my secretary.

Were those opinions in writing?—They were in writing.

Are they in your office?—They are in my office.

Were those individual opinions, or were they the result of any military consultation?—They were opinions that those gentlemen wrote by my direction; separate opinions; separate papers; and those papers were sent to the secretary of state along with my own opinion.

What was the next communication in point of time which you had with his Majesty's ministers upon this subject?—On the 18th of June lord Castlereagh transmitted his Majesty's pleasure for holding in readiness for immediate embarkation 35,000 Infantry and 1,800 Cavalry; on the 22d, the commander in chief transmitted to lord Castlereagh a detailed state of force to proceed on service, with a staff, civil and military, the force amounting to 35,400 Infantry and 1,900 Cavalry; also the force that would remain in Great Britain, Ireland, and the islands in the Channel.

Does that number include the Foot Guards and the Artillery?—The Foot



Guards, but not the Artillery ; Infantry I call them.

What was the force of the Artillery ?—I do not know the particulars ; I apprehend the Board of Ordnance can give a detail of them ; I cannot give it upon recollection, and have not it marked down here.

Was the 22d of June the earliest period at which so large a force could be collected ?—Upon my word I cannot say exactly, they might some days sooner perhaps ; on the 20th of May there was an arrangement of 25,000 men given ; afterwards, between that and this last date, 35,000 or more were assembled : the men were recovering fast ; there was a great increase of men during that period : I do not think such a force as that could have been well assembled before that period which may be called an army of 40,000 men ; such a number could not have been got sooner.

Have you any papers in your office which would shew what was the largest force which could have been assembled at different periods, previous to the 22d of June ?—I think not ; it is very difficult to ascertain the number at any particular point of time ; we had monthly returns, and there were intermediate returns, and there were returns of the state of the sick, and so on ; but I could not make a calculation for every week, of the numbers.

When were you next consulted relative to this Expedition ?—The next official communication was lord Castlereagh's notification on the 27th of June, of his Majesty's pleasure, that the earl of Chatham should be appointed to the command of the forces for foreign service, and that lieut. gen. sir Eyre Coote should be appointed second in command.

Was that the whole of that communication ?—That was the whole of that communication.

What was the next communication of an official nature ?—On the 15th of July lord Castlereagh requested, that another cavalry regiment should be added : on the 17th lord Castlereagh was acquainted, that the 2d Dragoon Guards were under orders.

When was the next communication on this subject ?—When the Expedition was determined on in the beginning of June, I had afterwards various meetings and conversations with lord Castlereagh, relative to the state of the troops, and the means of assembling them ; after they were put in

march to their several places of embarkation, and arrived there the end of June and the beginning of July, they were put under the orders of the general officers appointed for the Expedition ; a very large proportion embarked at Portsmouth, because they were carried by ships, of war lying there, and intended to distract the attention of the enemy, and leave them in suspense as to the object of the Expedition.

Were you consulted upon the plan of the Expedition ?—I cannot say consulted, further than the times that I have mentioned ; I at no time had any communication with the Admiralty or navy on the general subject of Walcheren, or the mode of execution ; I had, with lord Chatham and the Secretary of State, conversations relative to the troops and equipment, and all sorts of things of that kind, and with lord Chatham individually, perhaps ; whether that amounts to consultation I cannot say.

Was any detailed plan of the intended operations submitted or communicated to you ?—I have no recollection of any detailed plan, any full plan submitted to me ; nothing regularly officially in my situation of that nature : I knew, from a variety of people, a great deal which was going on, but no detailed plan.

Was your opinion asked as to the practicability of the attack on Antwerp, and the probable result of the Expedition, upon or after the 22d of June ?—I remember no opinion, nor could I expect any thing of that kind being asked after the army was prepared ; I recollect nothing of the kind.

Do you recollect any consultation with his Majesty's ministers on the subject of your answer to lord Castlereagh ?—No, none.

Were you consulted with about the appointment of the commander in chief of the land forces ?—I do not recollect being absolutely consulted by ministers, but I thought it a very proper one ; I knew of it.

Explain to the Committee whether the operation upon which you were consulted upon the 24th of March, was the same operation that was subsequently carried into effect, or do you consider it a perfectly distinct operation ?—Perfectly distinct.

Was that operation upon which you were consulted upon the 24th of March, laid aside in consequence of the state of the army not admitting at that moment

of a force of 16,000 men being applied to that service?—I suppose that was a principal reason, but I do not know what other reasons there might be; I have no doubt that was a principal reason.

In point of fact, at that time the state of the army did not admit of 16,000 men being employed on that service?—That was what I stated, I apprehend, at the time.

Was the basis of the army employed in the late Expedition to the Scheldt, the army which returned after serving with sir John Moore in Spain?—That would be more correctly known from looking at the composition of the force that went to the Scheldt; the names of the regiments: I think, on recollection, that it was.

Was it not a considerable time after the return of that army, the army being disembarked at different ports, and the regiments being very much mixed together in the transports before any effectual means could be taken for refitting that army for service?—It certainly was.

Did not a very considerable proportion of the force afterwards employed in the Scheldt arise from drafts from the militia, which were incorporated into those regiments?—Not only into those regiments, but into all the regiments I apprehend that embarked; I do not know the exact number, but no doubt there must have been a considerable number.

Do you recollect having repeatedly written at lord Castlereagh's instance, or directed the adjutant general to write circular letters to all the regiments to accelerate the refitment of the army, and to desire to know the earliest day at which the regiments could be completed for service?—This was repeatedly done.

Do you recollect that some regiments in the southern districts had not completed their equipments so late as towards the end of June?—I cannot recollect particular regiments, but I have no doubt that was the case; I am sure it was the case.

You have stated to the Committee that on the 21st of May you made a return to the secretary of state, of the corps of 25,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry; do you speak of the effectives as they then stood upon the monthly returns, or mean to describe that corps as having been then reported complete and fit for service?—The numbers were collected from the adjutant general from the last returns, and they stood on the returns as effective.

Would the effectives on the monthly returns distinguish whether they were equipped and fit for service?—They certainly were not from the monthly returns, but from the latest returns, which were probably later.

Do those returns distinguish whether they were effective, or whether they were equipped and fit for service?—I cannot say, this goes to numbers merely; here is a return of the southern district on the 7th of May, of a great number of the regiments, shewing the deficiencies of those regiments, which is of the nature alluded to; here is the deficiency of clothing, accoutrements and arms on the 7th of May, transmitted by sir John Hope, of 10 battalions in that district, which is a specimen of the others.

You have stated that you delivered in a written opinion to lord Castlereagh; did you receive in writing any comment on that opinion, or any letter in consequence of it, from lord Castlereagh?—I do not recollect receiving any.

Had you any conference or conversation with lord Castlereagh, or any other of his Majesty's ministers, on the subject of that opinion?—I do not recollect any formal conversation; I very probably had with lord Castlereagh, but I never had any formal way of explaining or going deeper into it, or any thing of that sort, that I recollect.

You never had any conversation with lord Castlereagh in the nature of debate or discussion of that opinion?—No, I had not.

Had not lord Castlereagh from time to time conversations with you with respect to the operations in the Scheldt subsequently to receiving your report of the 3d of June?—Certainly, upon some points; but I do not recollect any formal conversation or explanation of that answer or report that I gave; certainly there were constantly conversations of some kind or other relative to the state of equipment of the troops; that was the general subject, more than the policy of the object; that was none of my concern.

Do not you recollect having had communications with lord Chatham and lord Castlereagh respecting the Expedition, and particularly respecting the defences of Antwerp?—I cannot think that I could have any considerable conversation respecting the defences of Antwerp, for I never saw a plan of it; I do not recollect having a plan of Antwerp shown me; I

have been there myself, and as far as I knew I might mention, but it must be a very common conversation that passed on the subject; there was nothing written; nothing for me to judge from but mere conversation.

Did not lord Chatham and lord Castlereagh communicate with you on the subject of Antwerp, on the ground of your having been commander of that fortress about the years 1793 and 1794, with a view of obtaining your general opinion and knowledge of the state of the works at the time you were commander?—The army was encamped near Antwerp, and I was very considerably indisposed, and the duke of York desired me to go to Antwerp, which was in the rear of the army at this time, as a sick quarter, and to take the command. I was there about seven or eight days; during that time I looked about as much as I could, but it was very little: however I had a general idea of Antwerp, and I dare say I communicated that to lord Castlereagh and lord Chatham, very naturally.

Had not lord Castlereagh, both with and without lord Chatham, communications with you on the subject of the difficulties of ascending the Scheldt, and the difficulties the army might meet with in its ulterior operations against Antwerp?—I cannot recollect particulars; but I have no doubt we had many such communications, from the intercourse that was going on between lord Castlereagh and myself, and which was always on a very friendly footing.

Was not lord Castlereagh in the habit almost of daily communication with you, and of disclosing, in the most confidential and unreserved manner, the military operations which were in contemplation?—Lord Castlereagh I think was very much unreserved to me, as much as I could possibly look for as an individual certainly.

Did the opinion, delivered in writing by you to lord Castlereagh, ever become matter of discussion between you and lord Chatham?—No, I cannot say particularly; I do not think it had a formal discussion; I dare say many of the points might, to a certain degree; but as an opinion, it never came under discussion.

Were you ever asked to revise that opinion, or called upon for a further opinion?—I never was asked to revise that opinion, or called upon for another formal opinion of the same nature; that was a regular opinion I was required to give.

Was the operation that was afterwards attempted, the operation upon which that opinion was given?—That the paper explains, I should imagine, sufficiently; the subject was the same.

Were the opinions given by other officers who had been applied to by you, collected by you, and transmitted through you to lord Castlereagh?—They were, at the same time with my own.

What was the opinion given by you in consequence of the slight observation you had been enabled to make, while in command at Antwerp, of the probable state of defence of that fortress?—I was enabled to say, that the citadel was a very considerable one certainly, and would require a siege of some duration, probably, to take it. The town was surrounded by very high wall ramparts, there was a very deep ditch, great old mounds of earth, and other circumstances I do not know, I believe that was what is called a demi-rebutment; in short, it was a place that could not be entered without a regular siege unless it was surrendered, if there was a sufficient number of men in it; it has sustained several sieges, and has been given up without a siege, but then it was always when the country was possessed by the enemy, and then it must fall of course.

Have not many places, more considerable in point of defence than you at that time stated Antwerp to be, been surrendered on bombardment in consequence of an army appearing before it with adequate means, without a regular siege?—Many places have been surrendered certainly of that description, and under those circumstances.

In the case of Copenhagen, was not that reduced without a regular siege?—It was a regular siege, I apprehend, as far as it went; there were all the ceremonies of a regular siege, parallels and batteries I apprehend, but I am not sufficiently informed upon the subject; I apprehend it was attacked in a regular manner for a certain time; the town was not carried by assault, and I do not know that breaches were made; the siege was a regular one I apprehend.

Is Copenhagen a more formidable place in point of defence than you considered Antwerp to be?—All other circumstances supposed the same, I only judge from a plan; I never saw Copenhagen, I should judge it to be a more defensible place; a great portion of it is covered

with water, and is not to be approached.

Were there at the time you were in the command any out-works to Antwerp, to prevent an army from taking its position as near as it might find convenient to the place?—I have mentioned that I was not enabled to know it completely; but I do not believe there were any advanced forts or redoubts, or works of that nature towards the land.

What was the population of Antwerp; was it not from 60 to 80,000 inhabitants?—I know nothing about the population; it is a very large old city; the houses are very large in general; there is a great deal of vacant space within, which lies between the citadel and the town; it is of very great extent, one of the largest towns in Flanders.

Speaking generally, what amount of garrison would it require to put Antwerp into a competent state of defence, including both town and citadel?—I suppose not less than 10,000 men could be called a garrison for a town of that kind; but more would be better; if it was to be attacked, and to be defended, then it would require a very great army to attack it, of course, in proportion.

Was not it reasonable to presume that although the citadel might not be got possession of, the city of Antwerp might be forced to surrender?—I do not see that I can answer that question distinctly; it is a matter of opinion, and I have not sufficient knowledge of all circumstances to answer it.

Are you of opinion that it would have been an easy operation for the enemy to have collected magazines sufficient to have subsisted the inhabitants and the garrison of so large a town as Antwerp?—It is impossible for me to say how that stood; but I think from its situation and the size of it, that it would have required a very great force to have cut off the communication with the country; while that was open of course provisions must come in.

Speaking generally, what force do you think might be necessary to cut off all communication in the manner stated in the last question?—That must depend upon the strength of the enemy without the walls more than those within the walls; a small force might do it if there was no enemy in the country, but if there was an enemy's army in the country, from the situation of it, and its communication with the Scheldt, a river of that breadth and magnitude (it

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depends totally upon the force of the enemy in the country;) if the enemy had 10,000 men in the country, I suppose an army of four times that size would be necessary to besiege it, and to cut off the communication at the same time.

Had you ever any conversation with lord Castlereagh on the subject of taking Antwerp by a *coup de main*?—I do not think any Expedition would have been fitted out upon an expectation of that kind; I may have talked of it.

Had you ever any conversation with lord Castlereagh on the subject of taking Antwerp by a *coup de main*?—It is impossible for me to recollect things of that kind; it is very possible I might, that in the course of our conversation a *coup de main* might be mentioned, but no serious conversation of that kind, and of the feasibility of it.

In point of fact, did lord Castlereagh ever state to you the probability of success in the event of attacking Antwerp by a *coup de main*?—I do not recollect it.

Did lord Castlereagh state to you the general views he had of the manner in which that Expedition was to be conducted against the enemy?—I cannot say: these are all accidental conversations if such passed, but I cannot recollect these sort of things; I dare say he stated a great deal of most things that occurred to him, but I do not recollect the detail of them, or what they were.

Do you consider yourself as having been consulted as a military man upon the plan and execution of the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—I think I was consulted when lord Castlereagh wrote that letter to me to which I gave an answer; and I do not know that I was what you call regularly consulted at any other time further than conversation.

Is it not customary to consult you as Commander in Chief upon the appointment of officers to command detached Expeditions?—It certainly is.

Were you ever consulted upon the appointment of lord Chatham to that command?—I was consulted in a certain degree; I knew before he was appointed; I knew he was meant to be appointed, but it was not my choice; I was not asked as a choice, nor did I expect that, nor could I; at the same time, as I mentioned before, I thought it a most proper choice at the time.

Do you know whether lord Chatham ever commanded any Expedition, or any (G)

force before out of this kingdom?—I do not recollect the extent of lord Chatham's services. I was myself with him in Holland, and I know he served in the American war. I do not know the particulars of his services, but those circumstances occurred to my knowledge.

Do you know in what situation lord Chatham served in Holland, and what rank he had in the army in the American war?—I think he was a field officer in the American war, and was a major general in Holland.

Do you know that lord Chatham ever before had the command of 5,000 men in his life out of England?—I really cannot say particularly that I know he had 5,000 men under his command.

Is it not a part of the duty of the Commander in Chief to be prepared to answer to the Secretary of State, or the government, what the services of any officer have been whom they propose to him to be employed in service?—The Commander in Chief cannot give a detailed account of every officer's services. Lord Chatham's services were known to every body as well as to the Commander in Chief; he was a man of very high military rank, and who had always conducted himself well in his situation in Holland; indeed I knew him; he served more particularly in the division of the army I was in, and I saw every thing that was proper, very much so at that time, in lord Chatham; he was afterwards under my command in Kent, and I always considered him and found him a very excellent officer.

Without considering you as responsible for the immediate appointment of lord Chatham, do you not believe that lord Castlereagh communicated confidentially with you with respect to that appointment before the command was proposed to lord Chatham?—Lord Castlereagh certainly communicated to me, as far as I can recollect, and I could not disapprove, because I thought him a very proper man and a good officer.

Do you know what difference there was in the state of strength and fortification of Antwerp at the time the Expedition was undertaken from that in which it stood when you were there in 1794?—No, I do not; I never saw any written description, or any plan of it, and therefore could not judge.

You have stated that you had conversation with the Secretary of State lord Castlereagh, on the subject of Antwerp,

and that you were required to state what were the nature of its fortifications and its strength in the year 1794 when you were there: did the Secretary of State communicate to you that he had any information as to any alteration in the nature and strength of the fortifications of Antwerp from that time?—I do not recollect that lord Castlereagh required me to state particularly as to Antwerp, I suppose it did happen in the course of conversation.

Did lord Castlereagh communicate to you that he had had any information as to any alteration in the state of defence and fortification at Antwerp?—I do not recollect the particulars of any such communication.

Is it in the course of the service to discuss minutely with you the plan of operations upon which officers are going on service, or is not that left to rest with the responsibility of the officer employed, that officer taking such measures as appear to him necessary to collect information to direct his conduct?—I cannot say; I am so young in command that I have not had a great many opportunities of having these points discussed; it is very natural to communicate I suppose any thing with respect to a service of that kind; undoubtedly the detail is left with the Commander, who is responsible for it, and is to take charge of it, but every communication and information that can be collected is and ought of course to be given to him.

Was the force, mentioned by you as being ready on the 22d of June when you made your return to lord Castlereagh, in such a state, that if transports and men of war had been ready it might have been embarked at that time?—The greater part I apprehend certainly was, but they were then in separate cantonments, dispersed over the country, and it required a considerable time to assemble them before you could say they were prepared and ready for embarkation; they were in an effective state for service as far as I can recollect.

But if you had had directions to put those troops into cantonments nearer the places of embarkation, might or might not that have been done so that they might have sailed by the 1st of July?—No, certainly not; the troops could not have been collected at Portsmouth by the 1st of July, and nearly half the force embarked at Portsmouth.

The question does not relate to the pe-

ried from the 22d of July only, but supposing previous instructions to you had been given, to expedite the embarkation of the troops as soon as possible, might not they have been put into such cantonments as to have embarked by the 1st of July?—The whole of the troops were embarked between the 24th of June and the 9th of July.

Was not the whole of the army put in motion between the 24th and the 28th of July?—I should think so, except those that were very near the places of embarkation; but the whole force of 37,325, besides artillery and other force of that kind, were embarked between the 24th of June and the 9th of July.

Would not the removing the regiments from their quarters before their equipments were completed, have retarded, instead of accelerated their going on service?—It certainly would, and the troops could not have moved quicker than they did, because they could not have got through the country; there were not quarters for them, there were a great number of troops following each other through the same route; they were obliged to take a certain time before they could be assembled at the points of embarkation, that was done I apprehend in as quick a manner as was possible from the time of their being put in motion, and their being put in motion was in consequence of the time of embarkation being fixed, and between the 24th of June and the 9th of July they arrived successively at the places of embarkation, and were all embarked.

Were not the utmost exertions of the government and of all the departments, employed to prepare that army for service, and to embark it on the earliest day possible?—I think they certainly were, and under all circumstances, I do not believe such great exertions ever were made before with respect to that point, the equipment, and the embarkation.

Did you give it as your opinion to lord Castlereagh, that it was practicable to make any attack on Antwerp by the Scheldt?—I mentioned it generally as a combined operation of land and sea, and therefore I was not competent to give a peculiar detail of how an undertaking of that kind was to be conducted, because I was not master of the circumstances.

Did you give it as your opinion that there was any probability of Antwerp being taken by the *coup de main*?—I should think not.

From the number of garrisons the enemy have in that country, the low country of Flanders, if an English force had got possession of Antwerp, do you conceive it was possible they could have effected their retreat without great loss?—I have stated that they must have returned by the Scheldt, and in order to return by the Scheldt, we must have been previously masters of the passage from the mouth of the Scheldt to Antwerp.

Have you not witnessed lord Chatham in person exercising eight or ten thousand men much to his credit as an officer in the eastern district?—I do not know what particular occasion the honourable member refers to; very possibly at some of the reviews; but there were so many at that time I do not remember it.

You have stated that in the year 1794, when you commanded at Antwerp, you considered ten thousand men would be a sufficient garrison against a regular siege; what number of men do you consider competent to keep an active army out of Antwerp for ten days?—I did not make use of the words 'ten thousand men' as a sufficient garrison, I thought that the least that could be called a garrison for such a town as Antwerp; a garrison for defence I mean; that depends upon so many circumstances of preparation, and the number of that army, and in short so many things, that I cannot give a decided answer to it.

Were the ditches of Antwerp dry or full of water when you commanded there?—I do not profess a local knowledge of Antwerp to that extent, but I know a part of them were wet, and I believe a part of them were dry; I was ill; I was not in a situation to go about and know the place critically, but I believe they were partly both.

From the knowledge you have of the river Scheldt, do you consider that in case of attack, large ships could have gone up under the protection of the citadel?—I understood so, that they could go up to the citadel, and if an attacking army was not in possession of the opposite side of the river they would be safe there, and could not be got at.

Do you know the distance between Santfleet and Antwerp?—No, I really do not from my own knowledge; I suppose from fifteen to twenty miles.

Is it usual in military operations, to employ 30 or 40,000 men on a *coup de main*?—It certainly is not usual; it may de-

pend upon the object and the size of the town, and a variety of things, but I can give no critical answer to that question; I do not know an example. [The witness was directed to withdraw.]

[The witness was again called in.]

Are you acquainted with the topography of the country from Santfleet to Antwerp?—I never went from the one to the other.

Supposing a line to be drawn from Santfleet to Antwerp, do you know any and what fortresses which bear upon that line of communication?—A straight line would pass not far from Lillo; but I know no further than from the map.

Does Bergen-op-zoom bear upon that line, so as to interrupt the passage of troops or provisions?—I cannot speak as to the map of the country with great distinctness; it lies to the left of that line, but I cannot answer to all these topographical questions as to a country I have not travelled.

Do you conceive Antwerp could be effectually besieged, except it was invested on the side of the river as well as the side of the land?—It is possible to take Antwerp by a superior army without investing it on the side of the river, but it would be longer defended if it was not so invested.

Do you conceive that with a garrison of 10,000 men, Antwerp could be taken by a besieging army of 50,000, except invested on the side of the river?—I really cannot answer that question, it is impossible for me to answer it.

Could Antwerp be so invested without forcing the defences of the Scheldt?—It might if they came from the land side; if they came down from Brussels and the country side.

Could it be taken by any attack from the points of descent to which our army was directed, without forcing the defences of the Scheldt?—It certainly was possible.

Supposing the English army to have landed at Santfleet, would it in your opinion have been safe for that army to have advanced without masking Lillo, Bergen-op-zoom, and the other fortresses in that neighbourhood?—There must of course have been troops observing such places as are described, what came out, and what went into those places.

Supposing the English army to have consisted of 40,000 men, and leaving a sufficient number of men to garrison Walcheren and South Beveland, and to watch

the other places, can you form any opinion what disposable force would have remained to attack Antwerp?—I can form no opinion; it would depend upon the strength of the enemy.

Was the probable strength of the enemy ever communicated to you?—No; never, I do not know what that alludes to; I was not there myself, I could know nothing about the strength of the enemy.

Was it ever communicated to you by lord Castlereagh or his Majesty's ministers?—No, I recollect nothing about the strength of the enemy, that must have been varying at every period and every hour.

After it was known in England that lord Chatham did not intend to prosecute the ulterior objects of the Expedition, were you ever consulted about the propriety of retaining the island of Walcheren?—I do not recollect that I was consulted.

Not at any time up to the period of the evacuation of the island?—To the period of the evacuation of the island.

Did you express any opinion to any of his Majesty's ministers upon the situation of the army in the island of Walcheren, in consequence of the returns that were made?—I do not know that I expressed any particular opinion further than general conversation, general opinions, talking of these matters; I made no representation, if that is meant, I did not consider it as my business or my duty at all.

Were you ever consulted upon the probable disorders that an army in those countries was likely to encounter?—I do not recollect any particular consultation upon that head.

Did you ever hear or read in the military history of the world of a *coup-de-main* having been executed, where shipping was concerned, with 40,000 men?—I do not recollect any instances.

If it was necessary to invest Antwerp on the side of the river also, are there not fortresses below Antwerp on the left bank of the Scheldt, which it would have been necessary to take previous to such investment?—Antwerp might be invested on that side without taking any fortresses; there is a fortress within three or four miles of it down the Scheldt, but it might be invested without taking that fortress: I do not pretend to a local knowledge, and do not feel myself competent to answer all these questions.

Do you conceive that a great part of

the country covering Antwerp may be inundated?—There is a part next the Scheldt which I believe might be inundated; I believe the greater part of the town is on higher ground, and I do not believe any inundation can be made there, but I cannot answer critically these questions.

Were the representations of sir Eyre Coote, the Commander in Chief of the island of Walcheren, with the communications of Mr. Webbe, the inspector general of hospitals, communicated to you?—They certainly were, and every direction possible given by government to supply whatever was wanted; to send medical aid and medical comfort, and in short to do every thing that could be done under the circumstances of the case.

Were the state of the hospitals, as represented in the letter of sir Eyre Coote, and the general want of medical aid and assistance, communicated to you?—They were.

I understand from your answer, that you presume that the government took every care to supply the requisites desired by the Commander in Chief of the island of Walcheren, but do you know that those requisitions were properly complied with?—I do believe they were as far as they could possibly be executed. I know myself with respect to the medical assistance and medical men, for the directions went from me to the medical board to use every means whatever to send as many assistants there as they possibly could, and I know they did what they possibly could; at the same time there was a difficulty in finding persons; there were about 50 new medical men that were sent over in consequence of those representations, and indeed before sir Eyre Coote's letter.

Are you aware that in the correspondence of sir Eyre Coote, he complains that his requisitions were either neglected, or not complied with?—I cannot say I recollect the particulars or the words, nor exactly the objects they relate to; there might be requisitions for other matters besides those, but I am thoroughly persuaded every thing was done that was possible.

Do you recollect a letter of sir Eyre Coote, in which he complains that after three weeks application, only one or two assistant surgeons had been sent; and that during that interval, for want of medical aid, and for want of medicines, numbers have been perishing in the hospitals, and

the number of sick daily increasing?—I cannot say that I recollect those circumstances.

In addition to the orders that were issued to you in consequence of sir Eyre Coote's application to make every possible exertion for the relief of the sick in Walcheren, was not full authority given you to incur every extraordinary expence that could contribute to the relief and comfort of the sick?—Many of these things did not depend upon me as to the execution; certainly I know that there was no expence meant to be spared.

Did not you make hospital arrangements as early as the 4th of August in barracks on the coast, for the reception of the sick and wounded that might be returned from that service, to the extent of providing for 5,400 men?—I have a short memorandum on the subject; I do not pretend that the numbers are perfectly accurate, but the original medical establishment sent out was at the ordinary rate of about 35,000 men; that was 60 or 70 medical men. In the progress of the sickness a further number was sent, 46; and the medical board had repeated directions from time to time to use every means and supply every aid they could to meet the necessity of the case, but there was found great difficulty in procuring hospital mates, both for the Walcheren service and the sick in the home hospitals: on the first alarm of the increasing sickness, immediate orders were given at home to apply and prepare barracks on the coast district as hospitals for the reception of a large number of sick; the medical board had directions to administer every necessary aid on their arrival; all this was done in a sufficient time, and the service was well executed in all its branches; that part of the service, I think I can take upon me to say, I never had a single complaint from the commanding officers of the districts, and every thing went on well, and about 13,000 men passed through those hospitals.

Was the medical assistance furnished to that army on its leaving the shores of Great Britain larger than would have been furnished to any other army of similar strength going to any other part of Europe?—I apprehend not.

At what period was the first alarm of considerable sickness which required additional medical assistance?—The beginning of September I think.

In a former part of your evidence it is stated, that opinions were required of cer-



tain officers of his Majesty's staff; do you recollect whether those opinions were required as to the general expediency of attacking Antwerp, or were desired in reference to the preferable mode of carrying on a service already determined upon, or to be determined upon?—I apprehend it went to the preferable mode, that it took in the whole subject.

[The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

Sir LUCAS PEPPYS, Baronet, was called in.—  
Examined by the Committee.

Are you not physician general to the forces?—I am.

Were you consulted with respecting the nature and the period of the Walcheren fever previous to the sailing of the late Expedition?—I was not.

Were you, and at what time were you first consulted respecting the Walcheren fever?—Upon the 10th of September.

From whom did you receive the communication?—From the Secretary at War, Lord Leveson Gower.

What was the nature of the communication made to you?—An order to go to Harwich to investigate the diseases of those who had returned from Walcheren.

Did you go to Harwich in consequence?—I did.

What did you find to be the nature of the diseases?—Bilious remitting fever, usual in consequence of the climate of Walcheren.

Were you previously acquainted with the nature of the disorder to which soldiers were subject in the island of Walcheren?—Perfectly.

Then the disorder to which soldiers were exposed at that period of the year in Walcheren was perfectly known to you?—Perfectly known from communication from sir John Pringle, both by writing and conversation with him.

Was the extent, and were the symptoms of the disorder greater than might have been expected, had you previously known what was the destination of the troops at that season of the year?—I believe not.

What do you think to be the extent of the permanent injury which the British army has received, exclusive of the mortality which may have taken place?—It will be impossible to say till after the spring is over.

Do you know that in the fitting out of this Expedition, any preparation was made in consideration of the probability of this fever different from what is made in the

fitting out any other Expedition with the same number of men?—We were not informed of where the Expedition was going; therefore no particular preparation was made.

Do you know at what period of the year these disorders are most prevalent in the island of Walcheren?—July, August, September, and till the 10th of October usually.

Were you acquainted with the progressive increase of the sickness, until the number of sick had amounted to 12,000 men in the hospitals?—From the 10th of September I believe the progressive amount in the hospitals might have amounted to 12,000 men.

Were you, as physician general to the army, acquainted with the distress and want of medical assistance of every sort, and even of medicine, that existed during the progress of that sickness?—There was no want of medical assistance or want of medicines, but what was immediately supplied upon demand.

Were the complaints made by the Commander in Chief, sir Eyre Coote, upon that subject, laid before you?—From sir Eyre Coote, through the inspector of hospitals at Walcheren.

Then you were acquainted with the representations of Mr. Webb, the inspector of hospitals, upon that subject?—Certainly.

Then is the Committee to understand that those complaints were remedied, and all the assistance required upon the representations of the inspector of hospitals in Walcheren, and the representations of sir Eyre Coote, were satisfactorily supplied under your order and inspection?—The inspector stated that he was not in want of physicians or surgeons, but was in want of the inferior classes, such as hospital mates, which were impossible to be obtained in the number wanted.

Are you sure that the complaint applied to the want of hospital mates, and not to the general want of medical assistance, and did not contain an account of the death of the principal physicians there, and the necessity of supplying their places?—I am not aware that any physicians died there, and I am not aware that any demand was made for assistance which was not immediately sent, except the hospital mates, which the surgeon general could not possibly supply. I would add that the letter of the inspector of hospitals in Walcheren will state that, if called for.

What was the obstacle in your judgment which made it impossible to give a sufficient supply of hospital mates?—There were not sufficient medical practitioners in London willing to undertake the business.

• Do you know what efforts were made to induce hospital mates to undertake that business?—The applying to those who were not sufficiently qualified to have taken the duties of hospital mates on any other service, they were offered to go, and were admitted to go for that special service, but they were not in sufficient number to answer the service.

Were any additional inducements by pay or any other consideration of that kind offered, to induce hospital mates to undertake that service?—I believe not.

Do not you know that there was a demand and a complaint of a want of medicine, which complaint was not removed, and the medicines required were not supplied?—I am not competent to answer that question, as it does not pass through my office, but goes immediately through the surgeon-general.

Have you any reason to believe that if a larger pay than usual had been offered, more hospital mates might not have been procured?—I believe not.

What was the objection made by surgeons who were applied to, to go to Walcheren?—Those objections must have been stated to the surgeon-general; I have nothing to do with that.

Were you ever consulted upon the probable consequences of retaining the island of Walcheren after the accounts arrived of the increasing sickness?—I never was.

Do you happen to have understood that government had authorized the surgeon-general to consider that question, of the expediency of giving an increased pay to hospital mates, with a view of procuring a larger number?—I never heard of that; the surgeon-general can answer that question better.

Was any report made to you officially in the capacity of physician-general, or to your department, of the number of casualties which took place in the islands of the Scheldt, from the sailing of the Expedition till its return?—Constantly, from the inspector.

Was any report made of the total number of casualties?—A report was made weekly.

What was the aggregate number?—The deaths amounted to upwards of 1,800 in Walcheren to the middle of November.

Did that include those killed in action?—The number of 1,800 included those killed in action.

What was the amount of those killed in action?—Without referring to my documents, I cannot possibly answer that question.

What number of those sent home sick, died in the hospitals here or elsewhere?—Between thirteen and fourteen hundred.

How long do you apprehend it will be before those who have been infected with the disorder in question will be fit for service?—If the care is taken of them which is intended to be taken, they will be all fit for service again in May.

Then I am to understand, it is not the nature of the Walcheren disorder to have frequent returns on the patient?—Directly the reverse; I meant to say, and do say, that they will have frequent relapses, but probably will recover by May.

After the end of May, you think they will be safe from any return of the Walcheren disorder?—If they have no relapse from this time to May, I should apprehend they will be fit for service by the end of May.

Supposing they should have had a return between this time and May?—Then it is impossible to say when they will recover.

Are they not, generally speaking, liable to relapses between this and May?—In all probability they will be liable continually to relapses between this and May.

Then those who shall have had a relapse, will not be cured by the end of May so as to be fit for service?—It is impossible to answer that question; it is a mere matter of opinion; they may or may not be.

You are asked as a medical man, whether that is not the general nature of the disorder?—The general nature of the disorder is to have relapses; and if relapses to a considerable degree, the time will be protracted for a perfect recovery.

By a perfect recovery, are the Committee to understand that a soldier recovered by the end of May is fit for active foreign service in the field?—If he has no relapse between this and the end of May, I think those men will be perfectly fit for service by the end of May.

Then supposing they should have any relapse, the time when they will be fit for service is uncertain?—Perfectly uncertain.

Do you mean to say, that the 1,800 mentioned and the 1,300 is the whole ex-

tent of the loss either by the casualties of the field or diseases contracted in the island of Walcheren?—By no means, because many have died in the month of December, and those numbers are not yet taken into the account; the account of 1,800 and odd numbers, and of 1,300 and odd numbers, go only to the 18th of November.

Can you state the numbers that have died since the 18th of November, whose deaths are attributable to diseases caught in the island of Walcheren?—Not without referring to documents, which I have not by me, but I could easily refer to them.

Can you state them nearly?—I cannot state them nearly, for I do not know to any near sum; I cannot state them with any sort of guess.

You have mentioned, that you were perfectly acquainted with the nature of the Walcheren fever by communications with sir John Pringle; in your opinion is the nature of that fever peculiarly worse than it would be in any low land near the sea in that latitude, for instance the low land of Foulness opposite in Essex?—I believe the marsh fever is greater in Walcheren than any other place I am acquainted with, except Batavia in the East.

Can you state how many soldiers from Walcheren are now disqualified from service, in consequence of the disease contracted there?—I am not able to state that.

In case the destination of the army had been confidentially communicated to you, would you have advised extraordinary precautions against sickness to have been taken for the preservation of the troops?—Undoubtedly.

Have you had any communication made to you of considerable mortality prevailing among the guards who were upon that Expedition, within the last two or three weeks?—None whatever.

When you knew what the destination of the Expedition was, namely, that it was gone to the island of Walcheren, did you then make any alteration in your medical arrangement, or make any representation upon the subject?—None; as it was represented to us as only an Expedition for a few weeks, but that not officially.

Did you consider the medical arrangement adequate to an Expedition to Walcheren of a few weeks?—Walcheren being so near this country, it was not necessary to send out a larger establishment than was sent out.

Did you not conceive that the medical principle to be acted upon was the removal of the sick to the hospitals to be prepared in this country, rather than the accumulation of them in hospitals in Walcheren?—No doubt that was the best measure to have pursued, to have removed the sick to this country from Walcheren.

If there had been a mortality of the guards employed on the Expedition to Walcheren, is it necessary that such reports should reach you?—No reports from the guards are ever made to our department.

You stated, that in consequence of the information you had received, you did not make any representation to government; from whom was that information derived?—I do not know; as it was not official, we have no document to refer to.

Upon so material a point why did you act upon so loose information as that appears to have been?—We did not act upon that loose information.

Why did you omit to act, why did you omit to make any representation to government?—Because it is not our practice to originate any thing with us, but to obey the commands we receive; we are not counsellors.

As physician general to the forces, after the accounts arrived of the increasing sickness in the island of Walcheren, you were not consulted by government as to the fit remedies to be applied, or what means should be taken to obviate the increasing disorder?—From the 10th of September every exertion was made by government that could possibly be made to accommodate and relieve the sick at Walcheren, and those that returned to this country, both by communication with the army medical board and in every way.

Then the Committee is to understand, the first instruction given by government was subsequent to the 9th of September?—It was upon the 10th, from the 10th to the 16th of September that the first great sickness appeared.

No information reached you that on the 27th of August 3,000 sick were found in lord Chatham's army?—I believe that there is no document in the office to say there was any communication prior to the 10th of September; but I cannot answer that without examining the office books.

There was no communication made to you previous to the 10th of September?—Not to me personally; the first I heard of it was the 10th of September, when I was ordered to Harwich.

You have stated, that the better chance of recovering the sick was by removing them from the island of Walcheren; were you afterwards consulted by lord Castlereagh when he directed an enquiry to be made on a suggestion understood to have been made by Monnet, the French general, to the French government, that nothing could be so injurious to the health of the sick as the removal of them from the island of Walcheren?—I did not know there had been such a representation from Monnet.

You having given your opinion to lord Castlereagh that the patients should be removed from the island of Walcheren, are you aware that a letter was written by his lordship to sir Eyre Coote, containing this passage, "It has been stated that in a representation made by general Monnet to his government, he had recommended that the garrison of Walcheren should be very seldom changed, and that the sick should never be removed to another place with a view to recovery, it being found by experience that a greater number of the sick who were kept in the island recovered there, than of those who were with a view to their recovery removed: I wish you to communicate this circumstance to doctor Blane, in order that the truth of it may be ascertained;" was that ever communicated by lord Castlereagh to you?—The only way I can answer that question is, that I had no communication with lord Castlereagh upon the subject, but that if Monnet's opinion had been submitted to me, I should have differed with him entirely.

At the end of how long a period of time after the return of the soldiers from Walcheren in apparent good health, has there ever been an instance of the symptom of the Walcheren fever displaying itself?—From ten to twenty-one days.

No longer period has ever elapsed?—I have never known it longer.

You have been asked, why you did not propose an augmentation in the medical establishment; was not your knowledge of the certainty of removal of the sick to hospitals in England, a sufficient reason for not augmenting the medical establishment in Walcheren?—Undoubtedly, because the inspector at that time declared he did not want more assistance of the higher class.

Do you consider that men once afflicted with a remittent fever, are more liable than any other men to have that disorder again?—Undoubtedly, for a certain length of time.

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What length of time?—The following spring, or even the following autumn.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.  
—Adjourned.]

### 3.

*Martis, 6<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

THOMAS KEATE, Esq. Surgeon General  
of the Army, called in.—Examined by  
the Committee.

Were you consulted respecting the diseases prevalent in the island of Walcheren, before the sailing of the late Expedition?—I was not.

Were you at any time subsequently consulted upon that subject, and when?—I was consulted upon that subject only so late as the latter end of September.

Are you conversant with the nature of the complaint prevalent in Walcheren?—I have understood it to be the bilious remitting fever.

Previous to the sailing of the Expedition, were you acquainted with the prevalence of that disorder at a particular season of the year in the province of Zealand?—No otherwise than by the publication of sir John Pringle.

Had you known the destination of that army at that season of the year, should you have thought it necessary to take other precautions than were taken, to obviate the effects of the malady?—I should certainly have made representations to that effect.

What is the nature of the representations you would have thought it your duty to make?—To have obviated the effects of the sickness as far as lay in my power by such representations.

Do you think that the effects of the disorder could have been in any degree remedied by any precautions?—Certainly, precautions might have been taken that might have lessened the malady.

Was it known to you that the Walcheren malady was prevalent at that particular season of the year at which the Expedition sailed?—It was, as I have described before, by the publication mentioned.

What are the nature of the precautions to which you allude?—Medicines that might have been administered for preventing the ill effects of the disease by the

(H)

season, such as sir John Pringle describes; which I do not recollect exactly.

Do you think that any precautions, such as different clothing, or any other mode of disposing of the troops, or any hospital furniture which was deficient would have been of any avail to remedy the disorder?—I think the greatest care was taken upon that subject.

Were you at any time applied to, to send out additional assistance?—After the sickness commenced.

At what period were you applied to for that purpose?—The beginning of September, to the best of my recollection.

What were the directions you then received?—A certain number of the staff officers were required, and they were provided accordingly.

How many?—I think that the first was two physicians, four surgeons, and twenty hospital mates; but I can refer to documents if the Committee pleases, but which documents I have not now with me.

Was there any difficulty, in procuring the number of mates that were required?—There appeared to be very great difficulty, but it being the exclusive province of the inspector-general of hospitals to provide hospital mates, I would beg to refer to him for information.

Do you know what is the present state of that part of the detachment of the guards which served in Walcheren, with respect to sickness?—I have no concern at all with the guards, and do not.

In whose medical department are the guards?—Under their own respective surgeons.

To whom do those surgeons report?—I apprehend to their commanding officers, but I am not certain they do not report to the medical board.

Is the Committee to understand that the guards are under an exclusive staff, and are not under the medical staff?—Yes.

State to the Committee what the course of office is with respect to the medical arrangements of the army; from what department the medical board receives its orders?—From the war-office.

Does the war-office receive an order or instruction from the Commander in Chief, with respect to the extent of force to be provided for?—Yes.

State to the Committee whether it does not rest in the discretion of the medical board, what the nature and extent of the arrangements shall be for the number of men, they are directed to provide for?—

It rests with the medical board to state the extent of the supplies when they are ordered to make provision for a certain number of men.

When were you first acquainted that the destination of the army was to Walcheren and to the Scheldt?—Not until I received letters from the inspector of hospitals then in the Scheldt or Walcheren.

State the dates of those letters?—The first letter I had was dated August the 8th, Middleburg; received the 12th.

Was not it a matter of notoriety to you, as early as the 28th of July, that the Expedition was gone to the Scheldt?—I had no reason to think so from any documents that I had, and I do not recollect the date of the 28th of July; it might be so.

Do you recollect that official intelligence was received in this country, of the arrival of the armament in the Scheldt, as early as the 1st of August?—I cannot say otherwise; I have not a recollection of it.

Have you a recollection when the army first began to be unhealthy?—The date of the first letter to that effect, was the 19th of August.

When was that letter received?—The 1st of September.

Have you that letter now in your hand?—I have not; I can mention the abstract of it, if it is desired.

State the substance of it?—The substance of that letter was, I perceive, only some recommendations; but the letter dated the 20th, was for additional staff, viz. two physicians, four surgeons, one deputy inspector, one deputy surveyor, and twelve hospital mates, instead of twenty, as I mentioned before.

Did the letter state the amount of the sick in the army at that time? I believe not: but the document is easily procured.

Do not you recollect that the general state of the army, previous to the 20th of August, was generally healthy, particularly so?—It was stated to me to be generally healthy, and as a proof of it, there were no sick sent over, or very few with the wounded, who had arrived before.

If you had thought that any peculiar medical arrangements in addition to those you had recommended before the sailing of the Expedition were advisable to be adopted, why did not you recommend them or carry them into effect on the authority the medical board possessed between the beginning of the month and the 20th of August?—The medical board

have only to obey orders, and it was not their province as I conceive to form arrangements; but in the middle of September I was called before the cabinet, where I suggested the propriety of selecting physicians to go over and ascertain the nature of the disease and report.

Do not you consider it the duty of the medical department to make representations to government, in any instance where they think extraordinary arrangements are necessary to the health of his Majesty's troops?—The board has not been called upon to make representations concerning arrangements, and they conceived they would have exceeded their duty if they had voluntarily stepped forward.

Did not lord Castlereagh desire to see you upon this subject early in September?—When I had the honour of a message from lord Castlereagh to that effect, I was upon the coast making arrangements for the reception of the sick from Walcheren. At my return I immediately waited upon his lordship at the office, and saw his lordship's secretary; it was upon that occasion that I had the honour of being called as I before stated before the cabinet.

Do not you recollect lord Castlereagh having more than one conversation with you upon this subject, and requesting you would attend his Majesty's ministers for the purpose of suggesting to them the best measures which occurred to your mind for the relief of the sickness to which the army was exposed?—I recollect it perfectly well; his lordship desired me to wait upon his Majesty's ministers, and asked me whether I had any thing to suggest; I answered his lordship, that I conceived the only thing we could do at that time, was to send over all the assistance in our power, with bark and wine and porter, and to remove as many of the sick as could be removed to England.

In consequence of that communication you had with lord Castlereagh, were not three physicians sent to Walcheren to make a special report upon the sickness of the army?—Subsequently to that conversation with his lordship, there were three physicians sent to Walcheren.

Have you any reason, from the reports you received from the officers who corresponded with you in the army, to suppose there was any actual want of medicines experienced by the sick of the army?—From every thing I can collect from that

correspondence, I have no reason to think that the sick were in want of medicines at any one time.

You have stated that the medical board does not originate any measure, but receives orders from some other office; from what office does the medical board receive directions?—From the Commander in Chief, generally through the war office.

Did you receive no official communication, with respect to the maladies of the troops in Walcheren, before the beginning of September?—Not officially from Walcheren until the 1st of September.

Did you from any office in this country?—I had no communication with any other office than those mentioned previously to that time.

You had no official communication whatever, with respect to the diseases of the troops in Walcheren, previously to the 1st of September?—To the best of my recollection I had not.

Do you receive the returns of the sick of the army regularly?—Occasionally, but not regularly, as often as they can be made up and sent, they are directed to me.

Did you instruct the officers of the medical department attending the army in Walcheren to correspond with you?—Yes.

You received no communication from them previously to the 1st of September?—I have observed that I received a letter on the 12th of August.

Was that a private or an official letter?—Official.

From whom was that letter?—From the inspector of hospitals, the head of the department.

Was that the first official communication you received with respect to the state of health of the troops in Walcheren?—That was the first communication that I received respecting the troops in Walcheren, and was accompanied with a number of wounded, to the best of my recollection.

Were there any sick mentioned in that return?—There were sick and wounded, very few sick; the whole number not exceeding three hundred.

Was the sickness therein stated, the fever which was afterwards so prevalent among the troops in Walcheren?—It was not.

When did you first hear of that disease?—On the 1st of September.

From whom did you hear of that?—From the same officer.

When did you receive your first communication from lord Castlereagh on the subject of the disease of the troops in Walcheren?—I think it was on the 23d of September.

Do you recollect the date of lord Castlereagh's letter?—I do not recollect that I received any letter: it was a communication from my assistant at the office while I was upon the coast.

Do you recollect at what time that communication was made by lord Castlereagh to your office?—I apprehend it must have been a few days previous to the 23d.

Are returns regularly made to you of the state of the health of the troops at home?—On the occasion of the sickness prevailing in the army from Walcheren, the superintendence and charge of them devolved upon me, and I have received regular returns upon that occasion.

Have you those returns with you?—I have not, they are in the office.

Do those returns comprehend all the sick, or merely those afflicted with the Walcheren fever?—All the sick.

Are those afflicted with the Walcheren fever distinguished from the other sick?—They are.

Is the Committee to understand that there are or are not regular returns made of the sick of the army, and the nature of their diseases, at stated periods, to the medical board or any member of it?—Of the army in general, to the medical board, we make a report monthly to the Commander in Chief.

Did the medical board receive directions from the war office to prepare hospitals for the reception of the sick and wounded from Walcheren, and at what period did it receive those directions?—They received directions to prepare hospitals for the reception of the sick from Walcheren, but the period I do not recollect, but it may be very easily obtained.

Was it not on the 4th of August?—It is an official document, and can be produced to the Committee at any moment, but I have it not in my recollection.

You state that the first letter you received from Walcheren containing any account of the disease in the army, was on the 1st of September; are you quite certain as to that date?—I have every reason to think that this is correct, which I have taken from the letters themselves; it is stated to be dated on the 20th; a letter dated the 19th was certainly received,

but it contained nothing but recommendations for promotion.

What is the date of the letter you received on the 1st of September?—I received them both on the 1st of September; the date of the first was the 19th, and of the second the 20th of August.

Can you at all account for the length of time that letter was coming, from the 20th of August to the 1st of September?—I cannot.

Where was it dated from?—From Middleburg.

Is the Committee to understand, that if you had known the destination of the Expedition to be to Walcheren, you would have made representations to government of the nature of the diseases incident to that island?—If called upon so to do.

Not otherwise?—Not otherwise.

Had you known the destination of the Expedition to Walcheren, though not particularly called upon, would you not have provided medicines proper for an army going upon that Expedition?—If I had known it had been to Walcheren I should certainly have thought it my duty to have sent a larger quantity of bark; I conceived it to be a secret Expedition, that it was not proper I should be informed of.

Is there any other medicine you would have sent, besides a greater quantity of bark, if you had known of the destination of that Expedition?—I conceive that the medicines were sent in the fullest proportion for the numbers of the army, therefore I should not have thought it necessary to have added to any thing but bark, more particularly as it was so short a distance.

How long after the Expedition sailed was it that you knew it was actually gone to Walcheren?—I do not recollect that I had any knowledge of it, until the date of the first letter from the inspector of hospitals upon that service.

Did not you, in common with the rest of his Majesty's subjects, hear of the landing of the troops, upon the publication of the Gazette containing lord Chatham's letter?—Certainly.

Then as soon as you knew of the publication of that Gazette, you knew that the troops were gone to Walcheren, did you not?—Certainly.

Then if you would have sent a larger quantity of bark had you known that the destination was to Walcheren, why did you not send that additional quantity of bark when you knew in fact that the army

was there?—It was my duty to wait for information, as I conceive, from the head of the department, and for requisitions, without which I have it not in my power to send out stores or medicines.

When was the first requisition made to you upon the subject?—On the 11th of September, and received on the 18th.

Where was that received from?—From Middleburg.

That was dated the 11th of September?—Dated the 11th of September at Middleburg.

From the inspector of hospitals?—Yes.

What did that require?—Together with many other medicines, but not in great abundance, 1,000lbs. of bark.

When was that sent?—It was ordered immediately by me from the apothecary general the same day; the 18th.

Do you know when it was dispatched?—It was delivered to the storekeeper general on the 27th of September, shipped by the storekeeper general on the 30th of September, and received into store at Walcheren on the 15th of October.

Do you know how it happened that an order issued by you on the 18th of September to be executed immediately, was not executed till the 27th?—There was no request made to have it sent by any express in any more immediate manner: It was stated that the medicines would shortly be wanted.

Do you mean that in the requisition made to you from Middleburg, there was no pressing request that it should be sent immediately?—The word immediately was, I believe, used generally, but not to desire immediate conveyance by any express, to require dispatch.

Do you know whether in point of fact there was any want of bark experienced by the sick there?—I believe not.

Will you inform the Committee how it happened, that you who would have thought it necessary to anticipate this want if you had known the Expedition was destined to Walcheren, did when you had that requisition made to you so late as the 18th of September, not think it a pressing demand?—There was nothing said, that it was wanted in any hurry; and I attend always to the requisitions.

You did not recollect at that time that you would have furnished them with a larger quantity of bark, if you had known that they were destined to Walcheren?—Had it been left to me in the first instance to have furnished bark, I might have fur-

nished a larger quantity to Walcheren, and I believe should; but when it came to be the duty of the inspector of hospitals upon the spot, to give me information and to make requisitions, I was then obliged to conform to the requisitions.

Do you happen to know what quantity of bark is usually provided for ships of war in his Majesty's service?—I do not.

How soon could you have sent this bark, if you had thought it had been immediately required?—I believe that the bark, that was sent over before this reached Walcheren, went in a very short space of time; I do not exactly know what, but there were two quantities of bark, one in a division, and another subsequently, that reached Walcheren I understand before this bark did.

When did those two quantities go from England?—Ten divisions of medicines containing eighteen hundred pounds of bark, were originally sent out with the Expedition; this was taken into the chief dépôt at Veere, and it appears that the whole was issued from thence to the different services by the 7th of October, except some small quantities in detachment chests.

When did your bark go from England?—One thousand pounds of bark were ordered from the apothecary general on the 18th of September, which were shipped on the 30th, as I have said before; they appeared to have arrived at Flushing some time prior to the 11th of October.

The 7th of October is the time at which the former supply was issued out?—Except what was under the charge, and in the care of the regimental officer in the detachment chests.

Did not you state, there were two other quantities of bark sent out in divisions?—On the 15th of October seven hundred pounds were received into store at Veere, part of eight hundred pounds which had arrived at Flushing by the King George packet.

At what time did that arrive at Flushing?—It arrived at Flushing by the King George packet on the 11th.

I understood you to say, there were two other parcels of bark which had arrived at Flushing antecedent to the arrival of that which went from this country on the 30th of September?—They were sent, but I find not received, they were received the day I have now mentioned to the Committee.

When were they sent?—It does not appear what day they were sent off by my



present memorandum, but they were received on those days.

Does it appear when they were ordered?—I can acquaint the Committee by the official papers; on the 17th, 18th, 26th and 27th of October, there arrived on each day five hundred pounds.

Have you any reason to believe that on or before the 5th of September, an application was made from the Commander in Chief's office, to the office of the Secretary of State, to desire that the transport board would provide tonnage immediately for the conveyance of two physicians, and some other medical officers, I believe twenty together, with four tons of medicine?—I do not recollect it, but nevertheless it may be proved to be so:

Explain what articles are included under the term of medical comforts?—I consider wine, porter, barley, rice, oatmeal, &c.

Do you know that there were a sufficient number of medical comforts at all times for the army in Walcheren?—They do not fall under my cognizance.

Under whose cognizance does that fall?—The commissary general.

Do you know that at one period in the island of Walcheren there were not more than three hundred pounds of bark in store, a quantity stated as not more than sufficient for five days consumption?—I was not informed of any such deficiency; but when I had a report of only 50 pounds in store, I very shortly heard, in a very few days more, that there was four hundred pounds more found on board a vessel.

At what time did you receive that report of fifty pounds only of bark being in store?—On the 3d of October.

Do you know that at any time there was not a sufficient quantity of bark to administer to the sick in the island of Walcheren, in the proportion that that medicine would have been administered had there been a sufficient quantity there?—I have already stated that I do not know of any time when there was that deficiency.

By whose order or at whose request does the commissary general send out what are called medical comforts to the army?—I am not informed of that.

By whose order are medical comforts administered to the sick?—The head of the medical department upon the spot.

To whom does the head of the medical department upon the spot apply, for a

larger proportion of medical comfort if he should find a larger proportion necessary?—I apprehend that there is no other source but from the Commissariat department.

I understood you to say, that if you had known the destination of the troops to have been to the island of Walcheren, you would have sent out more port wine as well as bark?—Such I might have recommended, but I had no power of sending any port wine.

To whom must that recommendation have been made?—To the war-office.

Of what does the medical board consist?—Of three members.

Who are those members?—The physician general, the surgeon general, and the inspector general of army hospitals.

Who is the head of that board?—The physician general.

Are all returns made to the physician general ultimately from all the departments included under that board?—The returns are not made to the physician general.

To whom are they made?—The returns from the regiments are made to the inspector general, the returns from foreign service are made to the surgeon general.

What returns are made to the physician general?—None.

Do the inspector general and the surgeon general report to the physician general?—It is only a board on particular occasions, each member has his individual duties.

How comes the physician general to be called the head of the board?—Whenever the three meet at the board the physician general presides.

How often does that happen?—Upon very few occasions; chiefly when returns are made from head quarters, or the Secretary at war, to the three as a board.

Did the board ever meet on the subject of the diseases of the army in Walcheren? Never upon the subject of the diseases.

Were they ever ordered to meet on that subject?—They were ordered to meet on the subject of the supplies of staff.

When were they so ordered to meet?—I believe it was in the month of June.

I have understood from you, that you did not know what was the destination of the army; I now ask, whether subsequent to the sailing of the Expedition, and when the disease of the army had broken out, any order was given from any of the departments of state to the medical board,

to meet on that subject?—Orders were given subsequently to the breaking out of the disease in Walcheren, for the medical board to meet.

What was the date of that order?—I do not recollect exactly the date of that order, but it is very easily given to the Committee.

Did they meet in consequence of that order?—They did not.

To whom was that order addressed?—To the principal officers of the medical department.

Was it a letter addressed generally to them, or a separate letter addressed to each of the officers of that department?—A letter addressed generally to them.

How came the meeting not to take place in consequence of the order?—The physician general and surgeon general did meet.

How came the inspector of hospitals not to be there?—He did not give his reasons, but he did not co-operate with the two upon that occasion.

At what time was the meeting of the physician general and the surgeon general?—Immediately upon the receipt of the order.

Is the order in existence?—It is.

What was the nature of the order?—To provide for the reception of the sick from Walcheren.

Did the surgeon general and the physician general make any report?—They answered the letter; it was addressed to the three.

To whom was that answer addressed?—To the secretary at war.

Are not the sick of the whole of the army supposed to be under the care of the medical board?—They are, either conjointly or separately.

What is the distribution among the three members of the board?—The duty of the physician general is to provide physicians for the army, and to meet the board whenever ordered; the duty of the surgeon general is to provide surgeons, consult with the heads of departments upon foreign service, and upon the occasion of the sick from Walcheren to take the superintendence and charge thereof; the inspector of hospitals has the charge and superintendence of all regimental hospitals, and provides all inspectors.

The Guards, you say, do not come under the medical board?—Certainly.

To whom do the surgeons of the regiment of guards report?—I apprehend to their commanding officers.

Who provides medicines for the guards? The inspector general of hospitals.

You have nothing at all to do with the providing medical comforts or medicines or mates, or any other of the medical staff for the guards?—For the guards none.

Upon the landing of the troops in England from Walcheren, did they immediately cease to be under your care?—Upon the landing of the troops from Walcheren they immediately came under my care, in consequence of such order as has been stated.

Are they still under your care?—They remain so still.

Upon the arrival of the sick from Walcheren, guards and regiments of the line, were they separated, and under what care were the guards put upon their arrival in England if so separated?—Until they could be conveniently separated, they were accommodated in hospitals with the troops of the line.

Have they been so separated as to cease altogether to be under your care?—They were very early separated; they have ceased altogether, or nearly so, to be under my care.

Do you know what is now the state of the regiments of the line which returned from Walcheren, as to the disease they contracted in the island of Walcheren?—Generally improving.

Are there many still sick, and have any fallen sick lately who were not so before, and are there many relapses?—There are not many now sick, there have not many fallen sick lately, but there were a great many relapses.

Is there a considerable or any mortality now among the troops, in consequence of the disease contracted at Walcheren?—Very little.

Do you know that in the distribution of medicines which did arrive at Walcheren, there was any difficulty so as to prevent the hospital mates and the inspectors there, obtaining the medicines that were so sent?—At one period I did hear of some confusion of that kind; it was very little, and created no real detriment to the service.

Had you or had the medical board any thing to do with the providing bedding for the sick or blankets?—There was a certain proportion of bedding originally sent out, of which part, was blankets.

Have you heard any complaints that the sick among the troops were suffering from the want of bedding or blankets?—I heard of such complaints, and they were

immediately remedied by sending out a larger proportion of bedding and blankets.

Did the sick among the troops suffer from the want of bedding and blankets at any time?—No such report was made to me officially of the sick suffering from the want of bedding and blankets.

Do you know of any such fact officially or otherwise?—As soon as I received such report that the sick were in want of bedding and blankets, I immediately ordered a large quantity out.

Do you know of any such fact officially or otherwise?—I do not.

At what time was the requisition received for additional bedding and blankets?—The acknowledgement of the receipt of bedding is dated October the 15th, and was received the 21st.

When was it required?—I have not the document now with me.

When do you think the regiments which have returned from Walcheren may on an average be fit for foreign service again?—They have suffered so differently that I cannot answer that question directly; but I consider that the amendment has been so great in general amongst them, that in the course of a very few months those that are recoverable will be fit for duty.

What proportion do you think are recoverable?—I should think of the present number of sick, one half may be reckoned upon as recoverable fit for duty.

What is the total number of sick now?—Of four hundred in one district, I conceive two hundred will be fit for duty in a few months.

What is the total number in all the districts now sick of the Walcheren fever?—I have only a return from one district; I have sent to the other districts, but have not yet received them; the one from the Kent district mentions four hundred and upwards, of whom I consider two hundred will be fit for duty.

Have you inspected any of the regiments personally since their return?—I have made repeated visits to them all, to all the hospitals.

Then you speak upon your own observation when you say you think half in the district you have now mentioned are recoverable?—It is an observation made upon the return sent to me by the head of that district.

From your own observation of the sick returned from Walcheren, do you think that those who have been afflicted with that disease are likely to be as effective

for foreign service as if they had never been so afflicted?—I cannot mention any precise time when they could be fit for foreign service, but for home duties and light duties I conceive that they will be in a very little time in the proportion mentioned.

What do you mean by a very little time?—In a few months.

How many months?—I should fix the month of May to be the latest.

At which those who are in the best state will be fit for light duties?—Yes.

Does the medical board return to the adjutant general's office an account of the sick in the army?—I make a monthly return, and report to the Commander in Chief directly.

Do you know any thing of a report dated the 1st of February, and delivered in by the adjutant general to this House?—I do not.

By whom can such reports be drawn up and made?—I do not know to what the honourable member refers.—[The Report was handed to the witness].—I have not seen that before.

Upon what authority can these be stated sick in the army?—The adjutant general may possess returns from the different regiments separate from those from the medical board; but once in a month, the 20th of every month, the medical board send in a return to the Commander in Chief.

Do you know of your own knowledge, that persons who have been afflicted with the Walcheren fever, are subject to relapses, for many years, in spring and autumn?—I am not apprized of such circumstance.

When was the medical board first established?—In the year 1793.

What were the purposes for which that medical board was established?—To take charge of the sick of the army.

Are the Committee to understand, that the sick of the army from the year 1793, to the present moment, have been under the superintending care of the medical board?—Only until the year 1798, when a different arrangement was made.

What was the nature of the arrangement which took place in the year 1798?—It allotted to each individual member of the board certain duties, and certain duties, collectively to the board generally.

What were the nature of the collective duties?—To answer letters referred to them from head quarters, and to make a

return monthly of the sick of the army.

Is there any salary attached to the office of member of the medical board?—There is.

What is that salary?—The salary to the physician general is forty shillings a day, to the surgeon general three pounds a day, to the inspector general two pounds a day as inspector general, and two pounds a day as comptroller of army hospitals.

Is that salary of three pounds a day to the surgeon general exclusive of any other pay or allowance he receives for the discharge of his duty as surgeon general?—He has no other pay or allowance except actual travelling expences.

Do you consider the army as under the superintending care generally of the medical board established in 1798?—It is in a manner distributed under their superintendence certainly; taking the collective duties and the individual duties together, it is under their superintendence.

Have the medical board ever had referred to them, since the 28th of July last, to make any report to government on the subject of the disorder which broke out in Zealand?—I believe not.

You stated, that in the middle of September you attended a cabinet; what passed in that cabinet?—I was generally asked as to the state of the sick, both abroad and at home.

Were any particular and pressing directions given at that cabinet to you to send out medicines?—I do not recollect that there was any particular direction given to me to send out medicines; but I inferred generally that no expence was to be spared.

Were you not directed upon that occasion to do every thing that could possibly contribute to the health and advantage of the sick?—Generally so I was.

When the state of the army serving at Walcheren rendered the supply of medicines necessary, whose duty was it to communicate the want of that supply?—It was the duty of the head of the department in Walcheren to communicate the want.

To whom was it his duty to make that communication?—To the surgeon general. Directly?—Yes.

Did it become the duty of the surgeon general, upon that communication, to take every step necessary to supply that defect?—It became his duty to do so.

Do not you furnish medicines according to the climate to which the troops

may be going?—When it is known where the troops are going, it would be a consideration, if there was time given.

Do not you attend particularly to bark upon these occasions?—In general we have not the time given, nor are we acquainted where Expeditions are to sail, therefore the medicines and stores are made up generally for any service for which they may be wanted, and all subsequent supplies are in consequence of requisitions from the head of the department.

Do you mean to say, that if an Expedition was going to the Coast of Africa; you would not supply it in a different manner than you would if it was going to the Mediterranean?—Certainly, if there was time, and I was acquainted with its destination.

Would not bark have acted as a preventative as well as a cure of the Walcheren fever, at certain times of the disorder?—I apprehend it would.

If you had been acquainted at the time of the Expedition sailing with its destination, would you not have sent an additional quantity of bark as a preventative?—I have already stated to the Committee that I should have sent more bark if I had conceived it was going to Walcheren; but I beg to be understood, that as the bark sent out with the Expedition was not consumed until the 7th of October, and the distance so very short, there could be no doubt of getting more over in time, if requisitions had been made.

Had you any previous knowledge of the peculiar unhealthiness of the island of Walcheren except from sir John Pringle's book; was it notorious?—I conceive that all the country of Zealand was unhealthy, and Walcheren a part of it.

Do you conceive that the scarcity of fresh water, and the badness of its quality, had any influence in the disorder among the troops?—I have not heard of a scarcity of fresh water; but I have of the badness of its quality, and I conceive that was detrimental to the troops.

Do you conceive that if by any means the quantity and quality of the water could have been mended or increased, the health of the troops might have been materially affected?—I think it might have ameliorated their condition to a certain degree, but it could never have counteracted the dreadful effects of the climate.

Was the apprehension which you entertained of the effects of that climate such, (I)

that when you heard of that Expedition first arriving at Walcheren, you expected what happened?—I expected it to a certain degree, but not to the extent it has happened.

Then the Committee is to understand that the disorder differs in its virulence in different years?—I am so informed.

Have you heard that this disorder so prevalent now in Walcheren has been of very long standing there, or has only lately come to be so severe?—I have derived my information upon the subject solely from sir John Pringle's book.

If you had not read sir John Pringle's book, had you any other information on the subject of the sickness in Walcheren?—I had not.

For what number of men and what period of time were the medical supplies originally provided?—Considering it as for a secret Expedition for thirty thousand men, for six months.

Have you any knowledge of a letter having been received at the board of which you are a member, directing one of that board to repair to Walcheren in order to ascertain the nature of the disease then prevalent?—There was a letter of that description received at the board, directing one of that board to proceed with two physicians to Walcheren.

What is the date of that letter?—It was in September; but I do not recollect the exact date; but that can be easily ascertained.

Did a member of that board repair to Walcheren, in consequence of that letter so received at the board?—It was discussed at the board who was the proper member of the three to go; and it was adjudged to be the physician general, as it was a medical subject.

Did the physician general repair there according to his instructions?—The physician general waited upon the Commander in Chief, and it was settled by the Commander in Chief with the secretary at war; I believe that he was not to repair there, but that there were to go three physicians.

Do you speak from documents in the office of the board of which you are a member?—No further than that if my services had been thought more useful at Walcheren, than in the cure of the sick on the coast from Walcheren, I was ready to repair thither.

Is the Committee to understand from you, that the physician general refused to

repair there?—I cannot ascertain that, it being settled between the Commander in Chief and himself.

Have you not reason to believe, that the first report of any sickness in the army, received by his Majesty's ministers, was contained in lord Chatham's letter of the 29th of August?—I cannot answer that question, for I do not recollect any circumstance which leads me to it.

Had you yourself any earlier report of any considerable sickness in that army?—I had no other than what I have already stated to the Committee, dated the 8th of August, and received the 12th; that was the first letter; but the first that mentions the sickness in the army, was dated the 20th, and received the 1st of September, and answered the 5th.

Was the sickness considerable at that time?—The sickness at that time did not exceed from six to eight men of every regiment; it was of a simple form, and no extraordinary symptoms attending it.

Have you not reason to know, that the fullest directions and authority were issued in a letter dated the 2d of September, to the Commander in Chief, directing that every exertion should be made to meet the pressure of sickness that then prevailed?—There was a letter received at the medical board from the Commander in Chief to that effect, September the 4th, for additional medical assistants and medical stores.

Did the head of the medical department of the army in Walcheren upon the arrival of the Expedition in the Scheldt, make any representation to the medical board, that he considered the medical arrangements of the army inadequate to the service he was then employed in?—None.

Do not you consider it was his duty, if he considered the arrangements as inadequate, to make a representation to the medical board to that effect?—I conceive it was his indispensable duty so to do.

Do not you consider the medical department of armies employed on foreign service, to be acting under the immediate guidance and direction of the medical department at home?—By no means.

Do not you consider it their duty to report to the medical board at home the course of their proceedings?—I think it would be much better for the service if they did; but they are not in the habit of doing it.

Is the medical department at home in the habit of requiring such reports?—As

far as relates to returns of staff and stores and requisitions for such.

Does the medical department in no case order any additional stores to be sent out except upon a requisition?—Their orders are not to do so, but there are circumstances where they must exercise their own discretion, as in the instance of Walcheren.

Are you not of opinion it was the duty of the medical board, if they considered that there was any deficiency in the supply of stores or medicines on that expedition, immediately to repair that deficiency?—The medical board's orders are to wait for requisitions; but in the instance of such pressing emergency as bark for Walcheren, I thought it my duty to send it whenever I found there was the least occasion.

If you were of opinion that the medical arrangements that went upon that Expedition were in any respect inadequate, why did you not take immediate steps, so soon as you knew that the army was gone to Walcheren and the Scheldt, for supplying such deficiencies in the equipment of the army?—I conceived that the original supply would be adequate, until I should have requisition from the principal medical officers.

You have stated that a letter was received at the office of the board of which you are a member, requesting or directing that one of the members of that board should repair to Walcheren; what was the date of that letter, and by whom was it signed?—It does not appear upon my paper that I have at present the date.

Will you be able to give information to the Committee upon a future occasion?—To-morrow.

Do you consider that the chief of the medical staff upon the Expedition abroad, is any longer when once abroad under the directions of the medical board at home?—When abroad he is under the immediate directions of the commander of the forces upon the spot, and not under the direction of the medical board at home.

Do you not therefore consider it his duty, to report to the commander of the forces abroad, if there are any deficiencies in his department?—It is his duty so to do.

Can you inform the Committee what quantity of bark ought to be administered to one man in the course of 24 hours in the height of the Walcheren fever?—I have not been informed of its administra-

tion in that manner individually to each man: it is immediately under the direction of the attendant physician, who prescribes as he thinks fit.

What quantity would you think proper to be administered under these circumstances?—It is impossible for me to decide that, unless I saw the case.

Cannot you as a professional man inform the Committee what quantity of bark is administered to a strong man labouring under a remitting fever in severe cases in the course of 24 hours?—It must depend upon the nature of the case, upon the constitution of the man, and upon what his stomach will bear.

Have you known as much as a pound given in 24 hours?—I never have.

As half a pound?—I have not.

Have you never known eight ounce given in 24 hours?—No.

A quarter of a pound?—No.

Four ounces?—No not so much as that.

Two ounces?—I speak very vaguely; it is so much a matter of opinion at the time that a physician is prescribing for the patient, that I can scarcely say what might or might not be given.

What quantity have you ever known given?—I have myself known as much as two ounces given, but that has been upon particular occasions; I have known much less answer the purpose.

Supposing two ounces to be given to one man in 24 hours, and the whole stock at Walcheren at one period according to your own estimate to be fifty pounds, as that would make only one day's consumption for 400 men, is it not certain that the troops must have suffered from a want of bark during the existing sickness?—When I stated that only fifty pounds was reported by the apothecary to the head of the department, at one period, I also stated that 400 pounds was found in store at the same time, and to be added to that was the power of purchase there, which I understood amounted to 1,400 pounds, that they had an opportunity of purchasing to the amount of 1,400 pounds.

Were not those 400 pounds discovered accidentally?—I have reason to think that the 400 pounds was not discovered accidentally, but lying in some situation where it ought to have been found before, and was known to some of the department upon enquiry.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

FRANCIS KNIGHT, Esq. Inspector General

of Army Hospitals, was called in.—  
Examined by the Committee.

Were you consulted respecting the nature and the cure of the Walcheren malady before the sailing of the Expedition?—No, I do not recollect any question of the kind.

Were you consulted on that subject at any subsequent period, and when?—I do not recollect being consulted for that purpose; there was an order sent for one of the medical department to go to Walcheren; that was the only thing I know of; it did not fall within my province.

Are you acquainted with the nature of the Walcheren disorder, and the period at which it regularly returns?—I am acquainted with it, by having read sir John Pringle's book; that is the only knowledge I have of it; and knowing what the nature of remitting fever here is in the fenny grounds, I apprehend the nature of it is similar to the epidemic of the fenny swampy places in this country, aggravated perhaps by the number of men assembled together; but this I speak merely from reasoning from it, not from any experience in my official situation; it does not fall within my province as inspector general, the medical question properly belongs to the physician general.

It was however known to you before the sailing of the Expedition, that at that season of the year an army would be liable to that disorder in the island of Walcheren?—Certainly.

Were the hospitals in the island of Walcheren at all under your inspection, or did you receive reports from them?—Not in the least, it did not belong to me.

Were the articles, such as bedding, furnished to those hospitals, furnished from your department, or had you any connection with it?—I had no connection with it.

Have you any knowledge of the state of the sick that returned from Walcheren now in this country?—No returns come to me in the course of office.

They are not in point of fact under your care or superintendence?—Not abroad.

Those that have returned from Walcheren?—Those that have returned have not been under my superintendence further than as regimental sick.

You have stated that a letter was received at the board of which you were a member, directing that one of that board should repair to Walcheren, state the date of that letter, and by whom it was signed?—I cannot recollect the date, but I believe

and take for granted it was signed by the Commander in Chief, and transmitted through the war office in the usual way.

Can you give that information on a future day?—Most certainly.

Were any applications made to you to provide a number of hospital mates for the island of Walcheren?—There were requisitions made.

Did you meet with any difficulty in providing a sufficient number of hospital mates to meet the demand of the service?—I found great difficulties, not only in finding them for the service of Walcheren, but many other destinations.

Was any additional pay offered by you, in order to induce persons competent to undertake the office of hospital mates, to embark for Walcheren?—There was none.

Have you any reason to believe, that by an offer of additional pay more hospital mates could have been procured?—I cannot speak to that, not having tried it; but many statements have been made of the difficulties and the obstacles in obtaining them; I have represented upon several occasions the great dearth of the lower order of medical staff, and have pointed out some of the causes of it, which perhaps were not within our reach; whether any additional pay would have done I cannot say, I had no authority to offer it.

Did you state, in consequence of the difficulty of providing hospital mates for the service in Walcheren, to any superior authority, and to whom, the difficulty you found in so procuring them?—I cannot from memory say whether I did upon that special occasion, though I rather think I did, but upon many others I have; I rather think I did upon that occasion.

With whom would you in your official capacity transact business upon a question of that kind?—With the secretary at war.

Was the secretary at war apprized of the difficulty of providing hospital mates for the service in Walcheren, in the month of Sept.?—I cannot speak to the date, but I believe there was some communication made upon the subject; but by reference to the 5th Report of the Military Commissioners, a letter of mine upon this subject may be found, I think in Aug. or Sept.; but coming down suddenly for this examination I have no means of giving more precise information.

After the pressing demands arrived from Walcheren for additional hospital mates, was any particular report made upon that special service to any superior authority?

—I will not take upon me positively to say it was upon that special occasion, though I rather believe it, because the same wants existed in Portugal, in Sicily, and in the West Indies, and we were obliged to divide our medical strength as we could, according to the exigency of the service.

Do you believe that if you had been enabled to offer additional pay, it would have been in your power to have procured more hospital mates for the service of Walcheren?—I do not feel myself competent to say it would, because I think there are many other considerations which weighed against the obtaining a sufficient number of inferior medical officers; how far it would have answered I cannot say; but I rather doubt it, on account of the known sickness of the climate and the mortality that followed it.

In point of fact, you were not furnished with any extraordinary means of procuring hospital mates, to meet the extraordinary demands made by the disorder that prevailed at Walcheren?—I was not, to the best of my recollection.

You have been surgeon to one of the regiments of Guards?—I was.

To whom are the returns made of the state of the sick in the three regiments of Guards when at home?—They are made to the respective commanding officers of the regiments, and to the officers commanding the brigade, but they are a separate establishment from the army.

Have you now quitted your situation as surgeon to that regiment?—Yes, I have not been for years.

Was it by word of mouth or by letter, that those representations you have stated were made to the secretary at war, of the impossibility of procuring hospital mates for the service in Walcheren?—I said I could not speak particularly to dates, nor was I certain that after the business of Walcheren it had been so; but I rather thought it was about Aug. or Sept. but I speak from recollection only. If it was made, it was a written one; but I beg to speak with distrust of myself here, because I speak entirely from memory, but with an anxiety to answer any questions put to me.

If any representation of that kind was made, it must have been by letter?—Yes; but I beg not to commit myself to its having been made; but on many occasions before I have done it; and indeed, one letter in the fifth Report of the Mil-

tary Commissioners will shew I have particularly noticed the difficulties I had to encounter.

Do you recollect when the first application was made to you after the 1st of Sept. for an additional number of hospital mates for Walcheren?—If I recollect right, different requisitions were received, and as fast as we could provide them they were sent.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.  
—The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

#### 4.

*Jovis, 8<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

General Sir THOMAS TRIGGE, Lieutenant General of the Ordnance, was called in.—Examined by the Committee.

You are lieutenant general of the ordnance?—I am.

At what period did you receive instructions to prepare ordnance for the expedition to the Scheldt?—On the 19th of June 1809.

When were the ordnance preparations completed?—It was about the end of June; but I really do not recollect the precise day on which they were completed.

Could that amount of ordnance have been prepared at an earlier time, if earlier orders had been given?—They could have been prepared at any time, if orders had been given; I beg to say that I really am not at all certain as to the time at which they were completed.

Has any account of the amount of ordnance been prepared?—I believe it has, I do not recollect particularly; I know such accounts have been made out, but whether they have been given in for the use of the House, I am not certain.

Do you recollect what amount of battering artillery you were directed to prepare?—There were 70 pieces of battering train of guns, sixty-two 24-pounders, and 8 68-pounder carronades, and 74 mortars.

Do you recollect, in the instructions you received from government to prepare ordnance for the expedition for the Scheldt, that two distinct battering trains were to be prepared?—I never saw any such instructions; I only knew the amount of the ordnance to be prepared, and what I have



mentioned was the battering train only; I have not mentioned the field artillery.

Are you aware, whether in the embarking the battering train, it was allotted into different ships so as to go into different branches of the Scheldt at the same time?—No, I am not able to give any information upon that point; I never knew in what manner the ordnance were embarked as to particular ships.

In whose department is it to superintend the embarkation?—The embarkations are superintended by the officers of rank in the artillery at Woolwich, with all the other officers of different ranks under their direction, and also by the civil officers of the ordnance; I never understood it to be my business; I am generally attending the board in London.

Were any instructions given from the board as to the particular mode of embarking the battering train, with a view to the dividing it into different trains at the same time?—I believe not, I have no knowledge of them.

If any such instructions had been given, would they have come before you in the discharge of your official duty?—Not necessarily so; the orders of that kind are given by the master-general, and he communicates such parts of his orders to the board as he thinks proper, and I do not believe he made any communication of that sort.

In the absence of the master-general, do you not supply his place?—Not exactly; I have not the same powers.

By whom are the powers of the master-general executed when the master-general is absent?—By the lieutenant-general and board conjointly; in matters purely military, the lieutenant general gives orders of his own authority, because the command of the military corps devolves to him, as being colonel-in-second of those corps, but all other business is done by the lieutenant-general and the board conjointly.

Did lord Chatham, the master-general, himself give the orders for the ordnance for the expedition to the Scheldt?—He did.

To whom were those orders directed?—I believe he gave his orders to the military officers at Woolwich, but on the 19th of June his secretary, by his order, communicated to the board that such ordnance were ordered to be prepared for foreign service; the master-general frequently gives orders to the military officers at Woolwich, and to the civil officers at

Woolwich, for ordnance to be prepared, and communicates it soon afterwards to the board, but these orders do not go through the board:

Were you rightly understood as stating that the ordnance board received instructions to prepare ordnance on the 19th of June?—On the 19th of June the communication was made to the board of ordnance; the ordnance had been before ordered.

Then the communication on the 19th of June was not an order to prepare ordnance, but a notification that such ordnance had been ordered?—A notification that such ordnance were ordered, not with a view that the board should give the order, but upon the supposition that it was already given.

Who is the military officer at Woolwich who carries the order of the master general of the ordnance into execution?—The master general gives his orders to major general Macleod, deputy adjutant general of artillery, he communicates these orders to the officer commanding the artillery at Woolwich before they are carried into execution.

Who is the officer commanding the artillery at Woolwich?—They have different departments; the senior officer, general Farrington; I look upon as the officer commanding artillery, and general Lloyd commands the garrison; they have different duties.

Who gives the orders for taking up the transports for the ordnance service?—The board of ordnance makes a requisition to the transport board acquainting them what tonnage they want.

When was the requisition made by the board of ordnance to the transport board for transports to take the ordnance to the Scheldt?—I do not recollect exactly the day, but I believe it was about June 19th.

At what time were the transports reported to be prepared for the ordnance?—I do not recollect; but indeed that question cannot be answered directly, because the transports were prepared at different times, and loaded as they were ready; they were not all prepared on the same day.

To whom do the military and other officers at Woolwich report?—They report in general to the master general.

Are those reports submitted to the board?—No, they are not generally, the master general submits such things as he thinks may be of use to the board, and not every thing.

As you do not recollect that siege artillery was ordered for two distinct sieges, was there not a larger proportion, both of siege artillery and field artillery ordered and prepared for this expedition than for any other since you have been in the ordnance?—Yes.

Can you state the amount of the field artillery and the siege artillery prepared?—I have not the account of the field artillery; the siege artillery I have stated.

From what particular branch of the ordnance department is the Committee to obtain a return of the field artillery?—If the Committee orders a letter to be written to Mr. Crew, secretary of ordnance, it will be done immediately, or I can myself order it, if the Committee direct me so to do.

Was not the ordnance preparation embarked, and ready to assemble in the Downs as soon as the other branches of the expedition arrived there?—I always understood it to be so; I have no immediate means of knowing it, but I believe it was so.

Were not transports supplied for the embarkation of the ordnance equipment, in the proportion that they were required within the time that was necessary to complete the armament at the period it was required to assemble in the Downs?—The transports were very quickly supplied, and I have no recollection of any transports being waited for, for any considerable time.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Sir RUPERT GEORGE, Baronet, Chairman of the Transport Board, was called in.

—Examined by the Committee.

State to the Committee at what time you were instructed to prepare transports for the Expedition to the Scheldt.—On the 20th of May.

State to what amount?—I was not ordered to provide to any particular amount; but that a number of transports would be wanted.

Without specifying either the tonnage, or the number of men?—Without specifying either the tonnage or the number of men at that time.

At what time was it stated that they would be wanted?—As soon as possible. I gave notice in the hall of the transport board, that transports would be wanted, and we gave notice also at Lloyd's; but that none would be received who would not be ready on the part of the owners, in a week from the 20th of May.

State what passed in consequence?—After the expiration of a week, we had not sufficient transports. I had daily communication with the secretary of state, indeed several times in the day, and I reported progress; and at the end of the week, there were not by any means a sufficient number for the services which I understood were determined upon.

What number were forthcoming at the end of the week?—I cannot precisely say, for we renewed it at the end of the week; but the whole number of transports we took up for that Expedition amounted to between 23 and 24 thousand tons.

Was that the whole number that was required?—No, not the whole number that was required; for we had upwards of 100,000 tons employed for the whole Expedition: but only 23 or 24,000 were taken up in consequence of the orders we received on the 20th of May.

The remaining transports were before in preparation?—No; we had about 20,000 tons of transports. I cannot speak to the exact number, but perhaps 2 or 3 and 20,000 tons in the service when I received the order; and other transports in the course of the equipment arrived from different parts of the world, particularly from Spain and Portugal, which I believe were ordered home with a view to some service that was likely to take place.

At what time were you instructed to provide cavalry transports, and to what amount?—Not till the 20th of May; in fact, transports were wanted for infantry, for cavalry, and stores, the ships that were tendered were reported accordingly; such as were fit for cavalry were appropriated to cavalry, the other for infantry, and such as were fit for neither infantry or cavalry were reported to receive stores.

Do you remember any particular difficulty in providing cavalry transports?—There was more difficulty in providing cavalry transports than in providing ships for infantry or stores.

Do you recollect at what time the cavalry transports required, and afterwards made use of, were provided?—About the 17th or 18th of July the cavalry were embarked, all I believe, except the draft horses for the battering train.

When were the transports ready for the cavalry?—The 17th, 18th, and 19th of July, I think the cavalry were embarked.

When were the transports ready for the embarkation of the cavalry?—The whole were not ready till about the time

that they embarked; a part of them were ready, but not the whole.

From whence were the cavalry transports procured?—Almost the whole of them in the river.

Then there was no delay in the preparation for the embarkation of cavalry, arising from the expectation of transports from Portugal?—I think not, arrangements having been made by the secretary of state with the Commander in Chief of the army, and the lords of the admiralty; about the 15th or 16th all the infantry embarked at Portsmouth, at Dover, at Ramsgate, at Chatham, and at Harwich, and within two or three days afterwards the cavalry were embarked, except 1,000 horses that were meant, as I understood, from the secretary of state, for the heavy artillery; when I say all, I beg leave to be understood, the great body; there might be a few that did not come in exactly on the 15th or 16th.

When were the heavy artillery horses embarked?—We were ordered to provide for 1,000 horses of the heavy artillery; this service was to be provided for the last of all, and we embarked I believe, in a short time, between 6 and 700; I think within a week or 10 days after the other. If the exact date is material, I believe I could furnish it; it was between 6 and 700 horses for the heavy artillery. I understood from the secretary of state, that the Expedition might possibly sail without any of those horses, but that it would be very desirable if we could only send 500; in fact we sent, I believe, in about a week after between 6 and 700.

Do you imagine that there would have been any difficulty in procuring a considerable amount of transports earlier in the spring, if timely notice had been given?—We found difficulty earlier in the spring, and under the direction of the government we were constrained to raise the price from 21 s. per ton to 25 s. previous to this Expedition, for the service of Spain and Portugal.

Do you imagine that the transports were procured in consequence of that increase of price?—Most undoubtedly.

Would not increase of price probably have had the same effect at an earlier period?—It was in consequence of the scarcity of ships they did not offer. The prices for transports are fixed. Notice is given when they are wanted, and few or no ships offered at the regulated price. The price fixed for ships under the direc-

tion of the treasury of 17 s. a ton for single-bottomed ships, 20 s. a ton for ships sheathed with wood, and 21 s. for ships sheathed with copper.

Have not those prices been continually varied?—The regular prices have gone on progressively since the time I first became chairman of the transport board, and have increased from 13 s. a ton (the regular price in the year 1795) to the price that I have just mentioned, which in fact is the regular price now.

Do you imagine that it would have been impossible to have procured transports in the spring if a sufficient price had been offered?—Most undoubtedly you may have all the ships in England if you go to the price: if the price is large enough, ships may give up their engagements and other views to come into the King's service, if that is more advantageous than the regular trade.

What difference in the price do you think would have procured any very great additional number of transports?—I must beg leave to observe upon this subject I had many conversations, and I believe that my opinion in some measure decided the case. When we have transports in the service, many of them the first coppered ships in England, if they are paid at a guinea and others are paid 30 or 35 s. or 40 s. it produces great discontent, which perhaps does more injury to the service than the ships you would get at an increased price benefit; this was not only my opinion, but the opinion of the board, where there are some very experienced seamen.

In point of fact, you think a greater number of transports could not have been taken up about the 20th of May, without subjecting the public to a very great addition to the price, or subjecting the transport service to a great inconvenience?—I do not think that any advantage could have accrued to the service by raising the price very materially, and I frequently gave that as my opinion when called upon to increase the number of transports.

About the 20th of May, had not lord Castlereagh a communication with you with respect to the transport arrangements, with reference to the ensuing campaign?—Certainly, frequently about that time, and almost every day after during the time of the equipment, and I was told particularly that we were to provide infantry transports for ten thousand men; I believe cavalry to the extent, as nearly

as I can recollect, for six thousand horses; the stores depended upon the demands from the different departments, the ordnance, the victualling, and the other departments of government.

About that time was not there on hand at home applicable to service, about twenty-three thousand tons of transports?—I have already said, twenty thousand and upwards, and I believe it may be about twenty-three thousand.

Did not lord Castlereagh at that time go with you into the consideration of what amount of tonnage might be drawn from foreign service, applicable to the proposed service?—Most undoubtedly, we entered into every particular: his lordship had given directions, as I understood, to order home ships from different foreign stations.

Did not you understand that upon the expulsion of the French from Portugal, it appeared consistent with the demands of the service in that quarter, to withdraw a considerable amount of tonnage from Portugal, and particularly cavalry tonnage, for three thousand horses?—I do not at this instant exactly recollect the number, but I believe it may be about that number.

Upon the whole, was not about forty-eight thousand tons of transports withdrawn from foreign service, as applicable to the campaign at home?—I believe full to that extent.

Were not the instructions of the secretary of state to you, to use every endeavour to procure the additional tonnage in addition to the twenty-three thousand tons on hand, and the tonnage expected from abroad, to carry on the service in question?—They were, and I consulted with my colleagues at the board on the most effectual means of procuring sufficient tonnage, and they were of opinion that raising the price beyond twenty-five shillings would be productive of more injury than benefit to the service; we engaged ships for six months certain, and in some cases for one year, rather than produce discontent among the owners of the ships that were then in the service.

Were not the exertions of the board and of government so unremitting, with a view to the procuring a sufficient quantity of tonnage in the least possible time, that the possibility of requiring the services of neutral ships in the river, was a subject that received the fullest consideration and was only laid aside upon a con-

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viction of the serious objections to such a resource being had recourse to?—Finding that we could not procure immediately sufficient tonnage, I suggested to the secretary of state the propriety of taking into the service neutral ships, a great many at that time being in the river. The secretary of state sent for me in the chancellor of the exchequer's house, and this business was taken into full consideration in my presence; and it was finally determined, that it would not be proper to take them, as we could not have them voluntarily, and they must be forced into the service.

Do not you recollect that a part of the cavalry tonnage which arrived from Portugal, and which was employed upon the service in question, did not arrive at Portsmouth till the infantry was actually embarked?—The cavalry, to the extent of near 5,000, were embarked a few days after the infantry were embarked, and sailed with them, I think about the 28th or 29th of July; I think the whole sailed about that time.

Did not the whole amount of horses embarked upon the Expedition, consist nearly of 6,000?—Full that, I should think; some were embarked in men of war; I do not know the number.

With every exertion that could be made, was not it necessary to send about 300 horses of the battering train, within the next two or three days after the Expedition had sailed from the Downs?—The battering train did not sail all together, there were 3 or 400 that sailed after the others.

In answer to a former question, you stated that seven hundred horses of the battering train had embarked a week or ten days after the rest of the armament; I presume you mean after the first embarkation of the infantry at Portsmouth, which was about the 14th of the month?—The general embarkation, as I mentioned before, I believe was about the 15th or 16th; they all took place together, I should think ten or twelve days before the battering train, to the amount of six or seven hundred, were embarked; the battering train sailed in two divisions.

Have you known on any former occasion a great exertion made on the part of the country and the offices, to produce the necessary tonnage for the service than on the late occasion?—I certainly never did.

Do not you recollect, that exclusive of the demands that were made upon the  
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transport board with a view to this particular service, that between the beginning of March and the beginning of May, a corps of infantry of about twenty thousand men, and several regiments of cavalry, were embarked for the service in Portugal?—I cannot now recollect the number, but I know great exertions had been made, and numbers of men, I do not know the number exactly at this instant, had embarked for Spain and Portugal, in consequence of which the price, as I have already mentioned, had been raised to 25s. from the regular price of transports, to provide conveyance for them.

Was not it the deliberate opinion of the transport board, that no increase of price beyond that which was offered, could be prudentially offered, with the view to the general interests of the public service?—It was, and if the transport board had recommended a higher price, I think it likely that government would have authorized them to give it.

Considering the general arrangements necessary for this Expedition, on the part of the transport board, are you of opinion that the amount of force employed could have been sent on service earlier than it actually was?—I am convinced it could not.

Do you consider that it was possible to obtain 40 or 50,000 ton of shipping at the price of 25s. per ton in the month of March, in addition to the 23,000 which you have stated you had?—I do not think we could have had 40 or 50,000 ton at that price in the month of March.

Are you of opinion that in the month of March, any and what addition to that price would have procured them?—I am of opinion that as you raise the price you may get ships, to what extent I cannot say, but the ground on which we objected to raising the price was, that it would produce great discontent among the owners of the ships already in the service; and if we got 5 or 6 or 10,000 ton, it might not be good policy to take them under those circumstances.

Had you in fact any communication with his Majesty's ministers as to the increasing the number of tonnage for transports earlier than the 20th of May?—Yes; in consequence of which we raised the price to 25s. as I have already mentioned, from a guinea: previous to the 20th of May, we had many ships in the service at 25s. taken up in consequence of orders from the secretary of state, for the Portuguese and Spanish service.

Had not lord Castlereagh communication with you respecting the medical arrangements for the army on this service, so far as the transport board is connected with them?—We had frequent communications, even several times in a day, twice, thrice or oftener in a day, either with lord Castlereagh or the under secretary, concerning the providing shipping for the different departments of government.

Was not the proportion of hospital ships that should attend the Expedition considered, and was not it in the contemplation of government that from propinquity of the service, the sick might be removed in transports that carried troops to the hospitals in England, and did you not understand that that was a principal service that was determined upon?—I understood that the sick were occasionally to be sent to England; the hospital ship and convalescent ships were to the same extent that had been usual in other expeditions, to Copenhagen, to the Texel, and even to distant parts of the world; the transports, as they returned from the Scheldt, were ordered to be cleansed, fumigated, and provided with a double allowance of medical comforts, in order to bring back the sick, after we heard that they had so much increased.

Was not it your opinion that the ordinary transports that conveyed the troops with an addition to the medical comforts that were in store with the Expedition, were qualified to convey the sick back to England to the hospitals?—I confess, if I could have given them better accommodation I should have thought it my duty to do so, but the sick had increased so much that there was no possibility of providing hospital ships for their conveyance to England; we provided some of the transports with hair beds, which, with the medical comforts, we thought for so short a voyage might answer the purpose, but the country could not have furnished tonnage for hospital ships to the extent that was required within the time that was necessary.

Does not an hospital ship require from eight to ten ton a man, and could an arrangement at all adequate to the number of sick have been provided under the circumstances in which the country was placed?—The two hospital ships that were appropriated to that service, the *Asia* and *Aurora*, were about 480 tons each, and could not receive more in the cradles that were provided in hospital ships, than sixty men in each ship or thereabout.

Regard being had to the amount of the force sent upon this Expedition, and the portion of tonnage which was withdrawn from other services, and which could not with propriety have been paid off, and also regard being had to the proportion of the force that was carried by the navy, do you consider that the late Expedition, as far as your department was concerned, was one of great expence, or the reverse?—I think the reverse.

Do you mean to say that there were but two hospital ships, as such, attached to this Expedition?—Yes.

At what time did the conversation take place between you and lord Castlereagh respecting the increase of the sick, which made it impossible to provide hospital ships sufficient for their accommodation?—I cannot mention the exact day, I think it was early in the month of September that I went to the secretary of state's in consequence of receiving a letter from our principal agent, who mentioned that there were 1,400 sick; I saw the under secretary of state, and he told me he was sorry to say there were many more; at that time there was no possibility of procuring hospital ships to the extent that was required to bring over the sick.

Did you go to the secretary of state's office upon this subject, in consequence of any requisition upon the part of the secretary of state or the under secretary, or any officer of his Majesty's government?—I went there on receiving the intelligence that I have stated, without any requisition.

Were not you in the habit of having repeated and constant communications both with lord Castlereagh and Mr. Robinson, as to every point of the transport service throughout the whole of the business, whether it respected the sick, or any other department of the service?—Certainly, without the intermission of a single day.

Did not these communications very frequently take place in consequence of a message either from lord Castlereagh or Mr. Robinson, that they wished to speak to you?—Certainly very frequently, and once his lordship came over to my office; as I had frequently been sent for, he took the trouble to come over himself to make some enquiry.

How long do you conceive it would take to equip an hospital ship in the way in which these ships are generally equipped, and in the way the *Asia* was equip-

ped, after a requisition of that kind had been made?—I think not less than a month.

Had not you communication both with lord Castlereagh and Mr. Robinson, before the sailing of the Expedition, as to this question of hospital ships and convalescent ships, and was not it thought, that considering the short distance to which the troops were to go, the number of hospital ships then provided, together with the convalescent ships and the means of transport arising from the vessels which carried out either troops or stores, were sufficient to bring home almost any number of sick that were likely to require conveyance?—At that time we had no idea of the sick being likely to amount to such an extent, but certainly we could not have provided hospital ships or convalescent ships to the extent that was required; the under secretary of state, at the time alluded to, communicated to me a communication which he had from Portsmouth, requiring an hospital ship to each division: I told him, it was impracticable to provide them within the time required.

State whether you had any discussion with his Majesty's ministers upon the subject of the increased sickness of the army in Walcheren, previous to the time of your going to the secretary of state's office, on the receipt of the letter you have mentioned from your agent?—No.

What is the date of that letter?—I cannot at present state it.

You have stated in the former part of your evidence, that any number of transports might have been provided by giving money enough; what particular obstacle occurred against the providing more hospital transports, when the demands of the service and the cause of humanity required it?—I beg leave to state, that I do not recollect having said that any number of transports might be provided; if I said so, I beg leave to retract it.

Have you not reason to believe that the first intelligence received by the secretary of state of there being any large proportion of sick in the army in the Scheldt, was contained in lord Chatham's letter of the 29th of August, which was received at the office of the secretary of state on the 1st of September?—The first intimation I had was from our agent, of the 1,400 sick I have already mentioned; I never saw that letter of lord Chatham's which is alluded to.

Did not the giving 25s. cause consider-

able dissatisfaction among the owners of the transports who had been before in the service?—They never made any representation that I recollect upon that occasion.

Do you believe that the giving that price did not induce the owners of transports which had formerly been in the service, to demand an increase of price?—They demanded an increase of price previous to that, and obtained it; the 13s. a ton was the regular price in the year 1795, and from that time it has increased to the prices I have stated.

When you gave 25s. a ton to a ship, did not another ship equally good, to which you had only paid one guinea before, demand 25s. in consequence of your having given 25s. to the ship you last engaged?—No, they never did that I recollect; it was no unusual thing in Expeditions to raise the price for ships taken up at the period of that particular Expedition, when they could not be had without raising the price; it had been done in almost every instance.

You have said, that in order to induce many of the transports to accept of the arrangement, you engaged them for a twelvemonth, how are they at this time disposed of, since the twelvemonth was much after the time they could be used?—The number engaged for a twelvemonth did not exceed more than 2 or 300 tons, to the best of my recollection; these ships can be kept in the service if only employed as navy victuallers, or to supply our colonies abroad with stores, and the others might be discharged without the least injury to the service.

Did you state, that if a ship of 480 tons was completely ready for sailing in other respects, she would still take a month to equip her for an hospital ship?—I certainly did not mean that, but we had not ships of that description in the service at the time alluded to that could be appropriated to that service, and if hired, they must in the first instance be ready and manned in every respect on the part of the owners, before our workmen could work upon them to fit them as hospital ships.

What time would it take to fit a ship in other respects ready as an hospital ship?—I do not believe it ever has been done in less than a fortnight, but I will not say it may not be done in a week with great exertion. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

Major General CALVERT, Adjutant General of the Army; was called in, and examined by the Committee.

When were any communications made to you respecting intended operations in the Scheldt, and what passed in consequence?—There was very early in the year an urgent requisition on the part of government, that troops should be required for service, but I was not apprized for what service.

State any communication made to you respecting the preparing an indefinite force, which force was not afterwards sent to any other destination?—The first order that was given out to the troops after their return from Spain was by his royal highness the late Commander in Chief, specifying, that by the 10th of April he should expect the troops to be prepared for service; on the 22d of March a letter was written to the general officers commanding in the Eastern, Kent and Sussex districts, desiring that they would immediately report, for the Commander in Chief's information, the actual state of the troops with a view to service; the next requisition did not apply to this service; the next application made by the Commander in Chief's order was on the 5th of May, which was directed to the general officers commanding in the Eastern and Kent districts, for the same information in regard to the troops, and urging their immediate equipment; the next letter to the same object was on the 23d of May, which was directed to the general officers commanding in the Eastern district, the Kent district, and the Sussex district.

When were you first made acquainted with the projected Expedition to the Scheldt?—I rather think it was about the middle of May.

By whom was it communicated to you, and what was the substance of any communication made to you, and what instructions did you receive?—I believe the communication was made to me by the Commander in Chief, but every instruction respecting the preparation of the troops for service was previously given; I am not aware that any instruction immediately followed, for every instruction had been given previous to my knowledge where the troops were to be employed.

Was the Commander in Chief's communication to you in writing?—It was not.

State what communication you had with the Commander in Chief?—That a considerable corps was to be prepared for immediate service in the Scheldt; that it was to comprize almost the whole of our disposable force, certainly the whole of our disposable infantry, and a considerable proportion of our disposable cavalry; that it was to be prepared in two divisions, the one was at that time supposed to precede the other, and the latter, which was the reserve, was to be formed of those regiments that were least fit for service.

What was the amount of the force that was required?—I think the first division was to consist of 25,000 men, and the second division of 10,000. Here is a return of the force that was at that time put under orders for service, resulting from the returns made by the commanding officers of districts: the total is 8,569 cavalry, and 30,322 infantry.

Was that force ready for service in the middle of May?—No, it was not.

What proportion of it was?—It is very difficult to answer that question, because the returns late in April specified that a very small portion of the force was fit for service, having returned so lately from Corunna, and likewise from the militia volunteering during the month of April: that which I have stated was from the result of an enquiry made by the officers commanding districts on the 23d of May. There had been an inquiry made on the 5th of May, which was not so favourable.

What was the disposable force fit for service on the 5th of May?—I doubt whether the most satisfactory way of answering that will not be by putting in the reports of the general officers; the result is different as to almost every corps.

Have you any means of stating to the Committee, what, at particular periods, was the amount of the force that was actually disposable and fit for foreign service?—I should conceive the report of the general officers who were called upon was the most satisfactory that can be given.

Can you state the result you formed from the reports of the general officers?—I can state it as my opinion.

State it.—As far as I can judge from the reports of the general officers, the result of the enquiry on the 5th of May was, that the troops were not fit for service.

Can you state the number?—I can

hardly state the number: there are some corps stated to be to a certain degree fit for service, and some reported unfit for service; some are reported to be out of the hospital, but not in a state to be fit for active duty; other corps are reported to be at the time fit for active duty.

Did not the Commander in Chief call upon you, somewhere about the 21st of May, for a return to make to government of the amount of disposable force at that time fit for service?—The documents in my hand prove he did; and I was going on to state the number fit for service on the 23d of May.

What was the disposable force which on the 23d of May the Commander in Chief was enabled, by your representation, to state to government to be fit for service?—What I have before stated, 8,569 cavalry, and 30,322 infantry; that was the result of the enquiry made the 23d of May; it might be the 26th or 27th before it was given in.

Do you recollect a force of 25,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry being reported to government as fit for service by the Commander in Chief somewhere about the middle of May?—I should rather suppose not; I have no knowledge of it.

Were you at any time consulted with respect to the expediency of an Expedition to the Scheldt, or the mode of conducting it?—I was; not in regard to the expediency of an Expedition to the Scheldt, but in regard to the mode of conducting it.

In regard to the expediency of an attack on Antwerp?—On the mode of conducting it.

By whom were you consulted?—By the Commander in Chief.

Did you give an Answer in writing?—I did.

Have you that Answer with you?—I have not; I believe it is given in.

[The Opinion delivered by General Calvert to the Commander in Chief, was read.]

MEMORANDUM delivered by the Adjutant General to the Commander in Chief, on the 3d of June 1809.

“The difficulties which would have attended a debarkation of a corps of the magnitude necessary for the performance of the service in question, on an open beach, and from thence commencing so important an operation through a large tract of country, whose natural strength



has been augmented by all the science and military skill of the last century, have been so ably and so decisively stated, that I apprehend it remains only to consider of the possibility of the same service being effected by a conjunct operation of the navy and army; and in this case the Hondt or West Scheldt naturally presents itself as the channel through which it must be conducted.

"It is wholly impossible to enter upon any detailed reasoning on this part of the subject, without previously ascertaining to what extent local circumstances would permit of naval co-operation, which depending on tides, soundings, and other points immediately connected with that service, can only be learned by a communication with officers of the navy. But on a general view of the local, it would appear indispensably necessary to possess ourselves of the south end, if not of the whole of the island of Walcheren and South Beveland: and from thence, with the aid of the navy, and an extensive command of small craft, it might, I conceive, be possible to land a body of troops at Sandvliet, competent to effect its march to Antwerp, and to the reduction of Lillo and the other forts on the right bank of the Scheldt. It must however be remarked, that the citadel of Antwerp is formidable, and the works of the town itself such as would demand regular approaches, and a train of artillery, which could not be transported without much time and labour, unless we could secure the navigation of the Scheldt, which could only be assured by the possession of the forts, on the left as well as on the right bank of the river. From the moment our fleet and army appear off Walcheren, the enemy must necessarily be apprized of the object of the enterprise; and having once ascertained how large a portion of our disposable force was engaged in it, he would be at liberty to concentrate all his means of defence, which would be facilitated by the canals of the country, and the general course of the rivers.

"Having no data to go on, in respect to the enemy's force, no argument can be entered on that point; but it may be presumed, that on such an occasion he would not hesitate immediately to draw all his troops from the fortresses in Holland, the Netherlands, and French Flanders, and from more remote quarters, if he had sufficient time for the purpose. The service would be arduous, and the troops em-

ployed on it must unavoidably be exposed to considerable risk; but I humbly conceive the operation in this point of view, does not present the same insuperable difficulties; which I must be of opinion, would attend an attempt to perform the same service by a debarkation at or in the vicinity of Ostend, and by a movement from thence to the point of attack.

(Signed) "H. CALVERT."

Was that the Opinion delivered by you to the Commander in Chief?—It was.

Have you seen any reason to alter any part of that Opinion?—No, I really have not.

In that Opinion it is stated, that there were no data as to the enemy's force? was any information communicated to you as to the enemy's force, when you were called upon to give that Opinion?—It was generally stated, that it was imagined the country was very bare of troops at that time.

Was any thing more precise or positive stated?—No, not to my recollection.

Was any plan submitted to your consideration?—When the subject was conversed upon, the Commander in Chief had a plan of the navigation of the Scheldt before him.

You refer to the formidable state of the fortification of Antwerp; from what do you infer the fortifications were in that state?—From my own observations, having been there in the year 1794, and from having heard that the fortifications had been improved since that time, and that the defects which were apparent then had been remedied; I do not know from whom I had heard it, but as general information.

What was the state of the fortifications of Antwerp in the year 1794, which fell within your knowledge?—The defect that appeared to me at that time, was the great extent of the works, and many of them not being in a good state of repair; the citadel is detached from the town, and presents a much more formidable defence than the town does, but I by no means feel myself competent to give a decided opinion upon that subject, as it was merely in occasional visits to the town when the army was in that neighbourhood that I had an opportunity of making my observation upon it.

At that period was the town regularly fortified, and could it only have been taken by a regular siege?—That was a matter of opinion that probably officers versed in that kind of service would be

called upon to give an opinion upon ; I do not know that, visiting the town only two or three times, I am competent to give an opinion.

Did you consider it a fortress ?—Undoubtedly.

• That the citadel was a regular work ?—The citadel, to the best of my opinion, was a regular work.

Do you consider it a matter of notoriety that the works had been augmented since that period ?—I have understood so from conversation with persons that came from that country, that, since the French have been in possession of it, they have repaired the works.

Do you understand it to be a matter of notoriety, that the French have throughout all those provinces, a considerable organized national guard or militia, independent of their regular force ?—I have understood that a force of that kind exists throughout the whole of the French empire.

Would not a force of that description be applicable to garrison service within a fortress ?—I conceive it would.

Would not a detachment of seamen, marines and artificers, be also applicable to garrison service within a fortress ?—Certainly.

You having stated that you were in Antwerp in 1794, did you happen to know whether the province of Zealand, and especially the island of Walcheren, were unhealthy in the latter end of the summer and the autumn ?—It was generally reported so to be.

Did you consider it as a matter of notoriety that the island of Walcheren was an unhealthy situation for soldiers at that period of the year at the time you gave the opinion which has been read ?—The healthiness or unhealthiness of the island of Walcheren certainly had no influence upon that opinion one way or the other, it was merely a military question.

Was it within your knowledge at that period, that that island was unhealthy for soldiers ?—Certainly.

When you gave that opinion, did you take into your consideration the means of transporting artillery from Santvliet to Antwerp ?—I did ; and conceived it to afford one of the greatest difficulties of the service.

Would it not have required a great deal of time to have collected the beasts of draft, and to have drawn the artillery from Santvliet to Antwerp ?—It certainly would ; the quantity of time must depend upon

the operations of the enemy, if we were to collect our means of transporting our artillery in that country, and what state the country was in to prevent our collecting those means of transportation.

Do you think it would have been possible, by any means, to have conveyed an army adequate to the siege of Antwerp, with the ordnance requisite for that siege, from this country by Santvliet to Antwerp, without giving the enemy considerable time for preparation ?—Certainly it would not be possible.

In case of a failure, or even in case of success, would not the retreat of that army be exposed to considerable difficulty ?—I conceive that must depend so much upon the operations of the enemy, and the state the country was in, that I hardly know how to give an opinion upon the question, which is so very vague ; the retreat of an army from any country must be attended with difficulty, but that must depend as to degree upon the means the enemy have to assail that army.

You say that at the time you conversed with the Commander in Chief upon the proposed mode of making the attack, namely, by the course of the Scheldt, there was a map of the course of the Scheldt laid before him ; was there any accompanying information with regard to the state of those forts and fortifications which command at different places, the passage of the Scheldt up to Antwerp ?—To the best of my recollection there was not.

Neither as to their actual state for offence or defence, or the amount of the garrisons then occupying them ?—To the best of my recollection there was not.

From your knowledge of the country, having served there, is not Antwerp so situated as to be capable of receiving reinforcements in a very short period of time from a considerable distance of the surrounding country, owing to canals and rivers ?—It is.

Is it not peculiarly so ?—The course of those rivers which connect France with Flanders, as well as the canals of the country, is in favour of the enemy endeavouring to succour Antwerp.

After your Opinion had been delivered to government, by the Commander in Chief, were you ever called upon to explain any part of that Opinion.—I really did not know till lately that my Opinion had been delivered to government ; but I never was called upon to explain any part of that Opinion.

Then after that Opinion, you never were called upon for any further opinion relative to the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I never was called upon for any further opinion.

Was the opinion given by you, which has been read, an opinion arising from a discussion with the Commander in Chief's Staff, on the subject of the proposed Expedition to the Scheldt, or was it only your own individual opinion, without any consultation with other officers?—It was my own individual opinion, but I certainly had had conversation on that subject with other officers.

Could the supplies and reinforcements be cut off from Antwerp except by an army commanding both banks of the Scheldt?—I apprehend not.

Would it not have required a very large force so to have invested Antwerp with security to the besieging army?—As far as my opinion goes, it would.

Would it not have been necessary, to have secured our communication with that army and its retreat, to have detached a considerable force to occupy intervening posts?—I conceive it would.

What do you conceive would be a competent garrison for Antwerp?—I really have not local information enough to answer that question.

You have stated that it would require a very large force to invest Antwerp; to what amount do you suppose that force must be?—I really think it is hardly possible for a person to give an opinion upon such a subject without having time to consider the situation of the place, the nature of its resources, the nature of its defences, and the nature of the country round it.

In order to invest Antwerp, would it not be necessary to detach corps to mask Bergen-op-Zoom, and the other fortresses in that neighbourhood?—I conceive it would.

Can you form any opinion what the amount of those detachments must be?—It must entirely depend upon the force that the enemy had in those garrisons.

Supposing those fortresses to be competently garrisoned?—Bergen-op-Zoom itself, if competently garrisoned, I believe would require six or seven thousand men; the lines from Bergen-op-Zoom to Steenberg might be calculated to hold ten thousand, including the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom.

Who was present at the discussion be-

tween the Commander in Chief and yourself, to which you have referred, when the map of the course of the Scheldt was before you?—I really cannot recollect so as to speak positively, I rather think that gen. Hope the deputy quarter-master general was present, and I think col. Gordon who was at that time Secretary to the Commander in Chief; but it was a subject that was talked of more than once, it was a conversation that occurred more than once; it was not a council or any thing of that kind.

Are you certain that col. Gordon was present?—No, I have stated that I cannot be certain, but I rather think he was.

Or at any other discussion upon this subject?—I am certain that I had conversation with col. Gordon upon the subject, and I rather think in the presence of the Commander in Chief.

Are you certain whether gen. Hope was present at that discussion, or any other, upon this subject?—I certainly have conversed with gen. Hope upon the subject, and I am equally certain that I have in the presence of the Commander in Chief.

Was gen. Brownrigg present at that discussion?—To the best of my recollection gen. Brownrigg was indisposed at that particular time.

Did those discussions take place previously to your giving in that opinion which has been read at the table?—Conversations of that nature occurred both previously to my giving in that paper, and subsequently to it.

Did that particular discussion, when the map lay upon the table, take place previously to your giving in that opinion or subsequently?—That with other maps generally lay upon the table in the Commander in Chief's room.

You have mentioned a particular discussion with the Commander in Chief, when a particular map lay upon the table, and was consulted; did that consultation which you so alluded to take place previously to your giving in the information which has been read at the table, or subsequently to it?—I think previously to it, and subsequently to it likewise.

Am I correct in understanding that you had heard of an intention to send a large force to the Scheldt previously to your being called upon to give that opinion?—Yes.

What was the amount of the disposable force remaining in the country after the Expedition had sailed?—Of infantry little

or nothing, of cavalry there was a more considerable force; but that can be given with the greatest accuracy by a return.

In the different conversations you state yourself to have had with other officers on the subject of the proposed Expedition, was your opinion as to the probable difficulties of carrying it into execution diminished or increased?—They certainly were not diminished.

In consequence of those conversations with other military officers, did you conceive a favourable or unfavourable opinion of the probable result of that Expedition?—My opinion was, that Walcheren would fall; and I had great doubts with regard to the ultimate operations, as is expressed in my written Opinion.

Had you much intelligence relative to the strength of the army, and the local situation of the country, previous to the opinion you gave to the Commander in Chief?—I certainly had not; and I think I stated, in my Opinion, that for want of data, I felt it impossible to form an accurate opinion.

You have stated to the Committee, that between the return of the army from Spain, and the sailing of the late Expedition, requisitions were made at the instance of government from your office, to the officers commanding regiments, to know in what state the army was, and to press their preparation for service: upon a full consideration of the result of all the previous returns, did it not appear to you upon conference with Lord Castlereagh, when the letter of the 23d of May was written, that the 10th of June was the earliest day that there could be any reasonable expectation of the great body of the army being ready for service?—It certainly did.

Was not that letter of the 23d of May addressed to all the commanding officers of the regiments that were included in the first force of twenty-five thousand men ordered for service?—The letter of the 23d of May was addressed to the commanding officers of districts, not to the commanding officers of regiments.

With a view to its being circulated to those regiments?—Certainly; the names of the regiments are in the margin; the letter of the 23d of May was written with a reference to all the regiments supposed to be preparing for service, except those few light corps which had been previously inspected and reported upon by Sir John Hope, in consequence of a letter of the 27th of April.

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Were not those light corps fitted for Portugal, and not with a view to the proposed service in the Scheldt?—They were at that time intended for Portugal.

Was not it in point of fact found that several of the regiments could not be ready for service as soon as the 10th of June, and that the equipment of some of them remained incomplete till the end of that month?—There were several regiments, particularly second battalions, reported unfit for service as late as the result of the Inquiry of the 23d of May.

In your opinion, did the state of the army admit of its being earlier sent upon service?—I really conceived the 10th of June to be as early a day as the main body of the army could be considered fit for active service.

You have stated that you were consulted upon the late Expedition to the Scheldt, is it in the ordinary course of service for his Majesty's ministers to take the opinion of the adjutant-general of the army as to proposed expeditions which may be from time to time sent forth?—I conceive it to be entirely optional with his Majesty's ministers whom they please to consult with; by no means with the adjutant-general unless they please so to do; there is nothing in his office which entitles him to it.

When the state of the defences of Antwerp were discussed, did you represent to the Commander in Chief, or to the government, that you had understood the works of the place had undergone any improvement, and what, subsequent to the period you had seen them in 1794?—I really do not recollect any discussion upon the state of the defences of Antwerp.

You have stated that in your opinion, much of the difficulty of operating against Antwerp, would have arisen from the delay that must necessarily have happened in conveying the necessary artillery from Santvliet to Antwerp, and in collecting the horses and draft cattle necessary for the transport of that artillery; are you aware that the horses requisite for the transport of the artillery deemed necessary for the attack of that town, were provided at home, and accompanied the Expedition on service?—I was perfectly aware of it, but the mode in which the question was put to me did not give me the liberty of mentioning it; I was asked merely an abstract question.

Have you not known places more respectable in their defences than Antwerp, that have been reduced by an army with

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adequate means appearing before them, without the necessity of undertaking a siege of a more regular description?—I conceive a fortress cannot be taken without treachery, without a siege.

Have not fortresses been reduced by bombardment?—A bombardment implies some degree of siege; but I should suppose a very extensive fortress, if it is defended as it ought to be, should not surrender from a bombardment.

Was not the fortress of Copenhagen reduced by a bombardment of three days, and was not Copenhagen a place more respectable in its defences than Antwerp was when you inspected the works?—I really do not feel competent to answer that question; I do not know sufficient of the defences of Copenhagen, to say what they were.

Do you recollect that Antwerp, including the Citadel, was reduced or surrendered, although defended by an Austrian garrison, to the army of Flemish Patriots in the year 1790?—I know it as a fact without knowing any of the circumstances connected with it.

From the local knowledge you acquired of Antwerp in the year 1794, do you think it was either probable or possible to take it by a coup de main?—I do not think it probable such a fortress should be taken by a coup de main, the works being very extensive; I will not say it was impossible, but I should think it very improbable.

Generally speaking, if a place is regularly fortified with a ditch, &c. and all its ramparts armed, would any officer venture upon attempting to take that place by assault until a practical breach had been first made in the walls, supposing the place to be properly defended?—I conceive a fortress under those circumstances could not be attacked by assault with prudence, till a practical breach was made.

Do you consider Antwerp, strictly speaking, a regular fortification, and do you know that the batteries of Antwerp were armed in the manner described in the last question?—I really have not sufficient knowledge of Antwerp to answer the first part of that question exactly; and I have no knowledge whatever of the latter part of the question.

Does not a correct answer to all the preceding questions depend upon a correct knowledge of the nature and number of the garrison of Antwerp?—I think it

does very much depend upon those circumstances.

Do you know any circumstances that might have prevented a coup de main on Antwerp being successful, supposing all the army, except the division necessary for the siege of Flushing, could have been landed at Santvliet, in the course of a week or ten days after they left this country?—None but those naturally resulting from the nature of the place itself.

State what you consider those circumstances to be?—Its fortifications.

Explain more distinctly what you consider as its fortifications, were there any out-works?—I have not a sufficient local knowledge to go into the description of Antwerp, but it is generally impressed upon my mind that Antwerp is in such a state as would have made it difficult to take it by assault without any previous attack, but that is more the result of information I have received from others, than any personal knowledge.

Do you not consider Schovednitz, in Silesia, to have been a very strong place?—I have always heard it so represented.

Was not that taken by Marshal Laudohn by a coup de main?—It is an historical fact that can easily be turned to; I really have not it so correctly in my mind, as to be able to state it in evidence.

Might not the terror of a bombardment in a city so populous as Antwerp, where the inhabitants may be supposed not well affected to the French Government, and the garrison not of regular troops, but of armed burghers, have produced a surrender different from what would be expected from a fortress with a smaller population, with a garrison of regular troops?—I beg to state, that the answers I have given have been in a military point of view, when I have been asked questions as to the place being taken by bombardment; certainly, in a military point of view, a fortress should not surrender on a bombardment; but if you put the case of a rich and populous town such as Copenhagen, it is not merely a military question, but a political one.

Can any answer you have made, strictly confining yourself to a military point of view of this subject, be applicable to a populous city where the inhabitants may have a great influence upon the garrison?—I conceive in exact proportion as the inhabitants have an influence upon that garrison, the replies will not be applicable.

Are you able to state from your own knowledge, what the proportion of the armed French force to overawe the sentiments of the inhabitants of Antwerp was at that period?—I really have no knowledge whatever of the garrison of Antwerp, whether of armed burghers or others.

Have you any reason to believe that the inhabitants of Antwerp were ill affected to the government of Buonaparte?—No further than I should suppose all inhabitants of towns of that kind would be ill affected to his government.

Did you consider the possession of the town of Flushing as necessary to the ulterior operations in the Scheldt?—I should conceive that to be a question that can be answered only by naval officers, as connected entirely with naval services.

Did the country between Santvliet and Antwerp present any obstacles to the advance of an army?—I never passed through that country, and do not know; there is the fortress of Lillo on the right bank of the river.

Have you any information upon that subject?—I have not.

Do you know whether a considerable part of that country cannot be inundated?—I have always understood that it could, but I have no personal knowledge of it.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Lieut. Col. GORDON was called in; and examined by the Committee.

Did you not act as Secretary to the Commander in Chief previously to the month of July?—I did.

Were you consulted by the Commander in Chief, or by any member of the administration, respecting the projected Expedition to the Scheldt?—I was by the Commander in Chief.

Did you give your Opinion in writing or verbally?—The Commander in Chief desired me to put my sentiments in writing; I did so, and delivered them to him. [The Opinion delivered in by Lieut. Col. Gordon was read.]

MEMORANDUM upon the supposed practicability of destroying the French ships and vessels in the Scheldt, and in the arsenals at Antwerp, 31 May 1809.

“The only practicable modes by which an attempt to this effect could be made with any prospect of success appear to be,—

“First. By a conjunct operation of

the navy and army, the former acting in the river, and the latter landing on the coast, and moving direct upon Antwerp.

“Second. By a maritime operation exclusively from our ships and vessels in the river Scheldt, and acting from them with our land forces against such places on either bank of the Scheldt, as may be necessary to facilitate the operation upon the city of Antwerp.

“The primary considerations upon both of the above modes are the extent of our means compared with that of the enemy, and the obstacles we should have opposed to our attempts both by land and water.

“There does not appear to be any datum that can lead to any probable guess at the extent of the force which the enemy, may possess at Antwerp and the strong towns adjacent, or even at the extent of the armed population or militia of the neighbouring districts, but it is imagined “from various concurring testimonies that the whole regular force has been drawn off towards Germany, and that the country in the vicinity of Antwerp has been left more destitute of troops than at any former period.” This appears to be the utmost extent of our information, and upon the accuracy of which must depend the success or failure of our project.

“The means which we could employ upon this service are as follows; viz.

22 ships of the line, capable of containing each 500 soldiers.

8 more ships of the line.

30 ships of the line.

“Frigates and smaller vessels of war, capable of containing, 14,000 soldiers. Making conveyance on board ships of war, for an army of 25,000 infantry.

“The utmost extent of land forces that could be spared from the united kingdom for this service, is as follows; viz.

30,000 Infantry  
6,000 Cavalry

Total 36,000 Land Forces

“To this must be added the usual proportion of field artillery, say 12 brigades at least, and four troops of horse artillery, the horses of which may be calculated at least at 2,000. To this must be added, a certain proportion of guns of larger calibre, which with their equipage might require 500 horses more. If to this is added 500 horses more for the staff and

other services of the army, the land force will amount as follows; viz.

	Men.	Horses.
Infantry .....	30,000 .....	500
Cavalry .....	6,000 .....	6,000
Ordnance .....	2,000 .....	2,500

Total 38,000      9,000

Of the above the ships of war could convey 25,000 infantry.

"Transport tonnage must therefore be provided for 13,000 men and 9,000 horses, besides ordnance and camp stores.

"The whole of the above force being embarked, it must then be conducted to its final destination, which may be supposed nearly as follows, viz.

"It must be evident that if a land operation is to be attempted, no part of the above force can be spared for any purpose of co-operation with the seamen by partial descents from the fleet upon the shores of the Scheldt, but it must be wholly and solely appropriated for the attainment of its object by a march through the enemy's country. The places for disembarkation of this land force, appear to be Ostend and Blackenburg; and though it may be supposing a great deal, it must, to render the project at all possible, be supposed that Ostend, on the appearance of such an imposing force, opens its gates without opposition. The army could not move forward without having a place d'armes for its stores, &c. &c. and least of all, leaving a strong place of defence in its rear in the hands of the enemy. It must be therefore a fixed thing that before the army moves forward, Ostend must be in our possession.

"From Ostend to Antwerp there are two great roads; viz.

"The one by Bruges, Ghent and Lokeren, and the whole distance about sixty miles; but it must be observed that this route, besides leading through a low country intersected with canals, only brings you to the banks of the Scheldt opposite to Antwerp, and the means of passing the river having been probably removed, very considerable delay must ensue before even an attempt could be made by us towards the object of our enterprise. This route therefore must not be followed.

"The other road, and that by which the army must march, leads from Ostend, through Thoroux, Oudenarde, Alost or Brussels, Malines to Antwerp, and is about 100 or 110 miles.

"When it is considered that the under-mentioned capital towns, or rather fortresses, are within three days forced march of any part of our line of operations, viz. Lile, Tournay, Valenciennes, Mons, Ghent, it must be evident, that even admitting the utmost possible success to attend our advance, that a retreat by the same route would be, if practicable, one continued battle throughout the whole march against the collective force of that whole country.

"If this reasoning is correct, it follows, that against the destruction of the enemy's fleet at Antwerp, must be put the risk of the loss of the whole disposable force of the empire, and with this addition to the comparison that the risk must be suffered, and the object may not be attained, and that unless the army could be embarked at Antwerp, and proceed down the Scheldt, the loss of the greater part of it would be almost certain.

"It must also be observed, that in the foregoing estimation of the enemy's resources, no stress has been laid upon the force he might bring from the other side of the Scheldt, from the neighbourhood of Bergen-op-Zoom and Breda.

"In how far the navy might co-operate with us, by entering the Scheldt, and how far they might be able to navigate it, must be left for naval opinions to determine; but it would appear that unless we were in possession of Walcheren, Cadsand, or the shore on one bank of the river, that our ships of war could not afford us any effectual or indeed any assistance at all.

"Now to enable the fleet to possess themselves of any of the above advantages, the assistance of a floating land force is indispensable, and it has been shewn that we have not sufficient force for that purpose. The whole success of this operation would depend entirely upon our military means, the extent of which and the probable mode of employing them, if disposed of for this purpose, has been already fully set forth.

"The second mode for consideration is the maritime operation by acting with a land force from our ships and vessels of war on the banks of the river Scheldt.

"The force for this purpose may be selected from that above mentioned, to the extent judged necessary. The first operations that would be necessary appear to be the possession of Walcheren and South Beveland, or of Cadsand and South Beveland; the pos-

session of the latter appears to be indispensable.

"It is imagined that the disembarkation of the troops might be protected as high as Sandvliet, which is within twenty miles of Antwerp. If this could be done, and a landing in some force effected at Sandvliet, it might be possible to march direct upon Antwerp, at the same time that a corps endeavoured to take possession of the forts and batteries upon the river, and that the boats of the fleet, well manned, armed, and towing launches with troops, proceeded with the tide direct to the city.

"That this would be a most desperate enterprise cannot be doubted, and that in the attempt, whether successful or otherwise, a very large proportion of our naval and military means would be put to imminent hazard; but it appears to be an enterprise of less risk, and one which could be brought to an earlier issue and attended with less expence, than that which has been considered in the first part of this paper. (Signed) J. W. GORDON."

At the time you were asked your opinion, was the information in possession of government, stated to you upon which to form that opinion?—The only information I had received was that I have set forth in the paper.

Did you understand that that was the only information which government could communicate upon that subject?—It was the only information that government communicated to the Commander in Chief upon that subject.

You state that you had no data as to the extent of the militia, do you understand from what information you may have received, that the French had a considerable militia or national guard in an organized state throughout their dominions?—I understood it to be so, but I have no positive information of it; as a great military country, I take for granted they could not be without some such force.

At the time you were asked your opinion, was any plan submitted to you of the country, of its defences and its fortification?—None.

Have you any knowledge of the fortifications of Antwerp, and the state of its defences?—None but what I have derived from an inspection of the best maps.

When that opinion was asked of you, was no information communicated to you with respect to the actual state of the fortifications of Antwerp, of Lillo, and the

other forts upon the Scheldt?—No more information was given to me than that which is stated in the paper just now read.

In the supposition that Antwerp was a fortress that had a citadel, would not the militia force that France is supposed to have, be of considerable avail in its defence?—Undoubtedly it would.

Do you think it possible that a train of artillery could have been transported from this country, and conveyed together together with a besieging army to Antwerp, without considerable time being given to the enemy to prepare for its reception?—That is so very general a question; talking of a train of artillery, I should like to know the exact proportion of the artillery I am to answer to.

Such an army as would be sufficient to undertake the siege of Antwerp, on the supposition that its defences were strong, and that its garrison was capable of sustaining a siege?—It would certainly require very considerable time.

Do you think that it is possible to form a just estimate of the practicability of such an attempt, without knowing what were the nature and extent of the fortifications of Antwerp?—It was the want of information that induced me to give the strong opinion I have already given against it.

Do you not think that if an army had been sent to besiege Antwerp, it would have been necessary to have made great detachments to cover the different fortresses from which the enemy might march to its relief; as well as to occupy different posts in the province of Zealand, to cover its communication?—I believe there can be no doubt upon that subject.

Do you know whether any plan of the country or of its fortifications was given to lord Chatham, when he was intrusted with the command of the Expedition?—I do not know.

Do you know whether any instructions were at any time given to lord Chatham from the Commander in Chief's office?—Yes, there were.

Do you know what the nature of those instructions was?—There were instructions in writing for his guidance on points of military detail.

Do you mean the detail of military operations?—No, the interior detail of the army.

After you had delivered in that opinion, were you consulted by his Majesty's ministers, or the Commander in Chief, upon the subject of that opinion?—A good



deal of conversation passed at various times between the Commander in Chief and myself upon that subject.

Did you at any time see lord Castlereagh or any other of his Majesty's ministers, on the subject of the Expedition?—Lord Castlereagh frequently in the course of the business of his office.

Did any conversation arise upon the subject of that opinion between lord Castlereagh and you?—I think not.

You do not recollect having been asked any questions by lord Castlereagh on the subject of that opinion?—I do not.

Did not lord Castlereagh hold various conversations with you in the course of that service; and did not you know that lord Castlereagh was in possession of the military opinion you had given?—I certainly knew that the Commander in Chief had transmitted my opinion to the secretary of state, and during the course of the fitting out of the Expedition I had almost daily communication with the secretary of state; but what I mean, is, that I was never examined upon the subject of that opinion.

In the course of those conversations, have not the general difficulties of the operations passed under the consideration of lord Castlereagh and yourself?—It is very possible that they might, as matter of conversation.

Were the particular difficulties stated by you in your opinion, ever made the subject of conversation between yourself and lord Castlereagh?—I think not.

When were you first consulted by the Commander in Chief upon the subject of the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I cannot exactly say the exact date; it must have been some time a little prior to the date of that opinion.

Had you understood, before you were so consulted, that it was the intention of his Majesty's ministers to send a large Expedition to the Scheldt?—I had heard that some conversation had passed upon it in the latter end of March; but from that time until the beginning of May, I had no further information upon the subject.

What was the information you had the beginning of May?—A conversation with the Commander in Chief, which led to these opinions.

Supposing the operation against Antwerp to be conducted by the course of the Scheldt, do you consider that the occupation of Walcheren and Flushing were

necessary to that operation?—I have stated in the opinion that the first operations that would be necessary appeared to be to obtain possession of Walcheren and South Beveland, or Cadsand and South Beveland; the possession of the latter appears to be indispensable.

I wish to point the question particularly to the possession of the fortress of Flushing?—Unless the fleet could pass up and down the batteries from Flushing, it would appear to me that the possession of Flushing was indispensable, but not otherwise.

If Cadsand could not be taken, was not the possession of Flushing indispensable?—I think my former answer applies equally to that question.

Suppose the operation intended had been limited to the capture of Walcheren and Flushing, and that we had failed in getting possession of Cadsand, would not the same besieging army have been required, and would it not have been necessary to have occupied Beveland and Wolversdyke with a force to cover the siege of Flushing, and if so, to what amount of force?—It is very possible; but I do not think I can give an accurate opinion upon the subject, those only upon the spot can be competent judges upon that subject.

Does it require the same force regularly to besiege a place as it does merely to invest it?—I have always understood that when an army besieged a place it was necessary to have a covering army, and that investing the place was preparatory to the siege.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

[The witness was again called in.]

Is it the practice of government to apply to the Commander in Chief to name officers to command Expeditions?—It certainly is not the practice, nor do I recollect any particular instance of that being the case.

Was an application made to the Commander in Chief upon the subject of naming a commander for the Expedition that went to the Scheldt?—I cannot tell what direct communication may have passed between the secretary of state and the Commander in Chief upon that subject.

Was any application made through you, as military secretary to the Commander in Chief?—No, that is not the common routine upon these confidential occasions.

Had you, as military secretary to the Commander in Chief, any record in the office of the military services of lord Chatham?—A short time before I left the office of the Commander in Chief, I suggested to the Commander in Chief the expediency of calling for the military services of every officer in the army above the rank of a field officer; I believe that the Commander in Chief did so, and that the services of every officer above that rank are now recorded under the signature of the respective officers, in the office of the commanding officer.

You apprehend that those records are to be found in the office?—Certainly I do.

Do you recollect that application was made for officers to go out to Walcheren, after the surrender of Flushing, to command?—After lord Chatham returned to Walcheren, application was certainly made for a lieutenant general to be sent to relieve sir Eyre Coote, who was left in command of the force at Walcheren.

As you have referred to the services of general officers having been called for, and stated to be given by themselves, do you or do you not recollect that the Commander in Chief so calling for those services, calling upon the officers themselves to state those services, marked his communication to them as secret?—The circular letter is marked secret.

Was it not meant, if it is consistent with your knowledge, that the secrecy so used on the part of the Commander in Chief, should convey to those general officers, that such returns were solely intended for his information, as Commander in Chief of the army?—I take it for granted it was intended for the information of the Commander in Chief.

Do you know that lord Chatham served in America?—I cannot speak to the points of service of a general officer so generally as I could wish: I have understood that lord Chatham served in America.

In the capacity of a field officer?—I do not know in what capacity.

Have you been informed that lord Chatham had ever served in the West Indies and for what period?—I do not know.

Do you think every possible exertion was made in every department of government, to fit out the Expedition intended against Walcheren?—As far as came within my knowledge it appeared that every extraordinary exertion was made.

Was there any exertion in any department of government, with which you had

not an opportunity of being in some respect acquainted?—I cannot venture to speak in this place of the exertions of any other department of government than that which comes within my own personal knowledge.

To your knowledge, were any particular instructions given to lord Chatham to lie down for the siege of Flushing before he proceeded to the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—Not that I know of.

Supposing our army in possession of the town of Antwerp, do you imagine they would not have possessed themselves of sufficient quantity of artillery and of ammunition to have enabled them, if it had been necessary, to have attacked the citadel of Antwerp?—I have already said that I have no information upon the subject of Antwerp.

Do you know whether or not the possession of the citadel of Antwerp would have been necessary to have enabled our troops to have destroyed the naval arsenals and the ships then building at Antwerp?—It appears to me that my last answer equally applies to this question.

Had you never heard that Antwerp, at the time that our army went against Walcheren, was in that situation of defence that some parts of the curtain and bastions were in a state of ruin, and might be escalated by our troops?—I humbly beg leave to observe, that my last answer equally applies to this question also.

What time do you imagine it would have occupied for our troops to march from the place they were intended to have landed at to have reached Antwerp?—I do not know what place they were intended to have landed at.

Do you not know the distance between Santvliet and Antwerp, as you have had reference to plans of the country?—The distance between Santvliet and Antwerp is between three and four leagues, something under twenty miles.

Supposing our army had not been detained by the siege of Flushing, but had proceeded immediately to Santvliet, what time would it have required to have reached Antwerp, supposing no great army assembled to oppose their progress?—Supposing the whole army to have landed at Santvliet, and nothing to have opposed their progress, they could have marched twenty miles I suppose in one day.

Do not you suppose that in every military expedition, every thing almost depends upon energy and exertion, and that

the delay of an hour may be the ruin of the whole enterprize?—In every military expedition every thing depends upon energy, skill, and exertion; the delay of an hour may certainly be of great consequence.

I understand you to have said in the early part of your examination, that all the knowledge you have of the country was from maps; is there any map of the fortifications of Antwerp in the Commander in Chief's office?—I do not know that there is a very detailed map of the fortifications of Antwerp, in the office of the Commander in Chief.

I understand from you there is a map of the fortifications of Antwerp; can you recollect whether that map is of the fortifications of Antwerp in their present improved state, or of their state before they were repaired and improved by the present government of France?—I do not think I said there was any particular map of the fortifications of Antwerp.

When you wrote that opinion with respect to the Expedition which has been read, were you aware of a ford practicable for an army from the eastern coast of South Beveland to the continent across the canal which connects the East and the West Scheldt?—I think I have heard there was a ford across the Bergen-op-Zoom channel, but I do not know from what quarter I heard it; it was only a rumour, and I was not certain of it.

If you had been certain of that fact, would it at all have altered your opinion as to the course to be pursued with a view to the attainment of that part of the object which related to Antwerp?—That must depend very much upon the nature of the ford; if the whole army could have passed it the cavalry and the wheel carriages certainly would.

From the information you had received of the state of Antwerp with respect to its works, with respect to its fortifications, and with respect to its means of defence, is it your opinion that it could have been taken by a coup-de-main?—I have already said, that I have no other information on the subject of Antwerp than what is contained in that paper, and my opinion upon that is fully set forth.—[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

[The witness was again called in.]

Have you any recollection of having sent a letter through the medium of Mr. Moore of the war office to the medical department some time in the month of

September last?—I was constantly in the habit of corresponding with the war office on the subject of the medical department; I may have sent twenty letters in the course of that month.

If you sent any letter through Mr. Moore to the medical department in the month of September, can that letter be produced?—I should believe so.

In your opinion was not the army that sailed to the Scheldt in point of efficiency and discipline complete?—Certainly.—[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Captain Sir HOME POPHAM, a member of the House, attending in his place, was examined.

When were you first consulted with relation to the objects of the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—I think I was sent for on the 4th of June in the evening, to come to town as early as possible and to wait on lord Mulgrave.

Will you state what passed at that time?—I think, as nearly as I can recollect, my lord Mulgrave said there was a large disposable force, and that as the French had a very strong fleet in the Scheldt and were still building more ships, it would be very desirable to make an effort to destroy them, and he requested that I would turn my thoughts to that subject, as it would be very desirable that I should see lord Chatham and lord Castlereagh in the course of a day or two.

Was that all that passed at that consultation?—That was the general subject of the conversation; lord Mulgrave stated there were one or two modes proposed of attacking Antwerp, the one by Ostend and another by the Scheldt.

Were those plans submitted to you for your consideration?—No, they were not.

In consequence of that conversation had you any communication with lord Chatham and lord Castlereagh?—After that conversation I committed some arrangements to paper, and I was afterwards sent for to bring those memoranda to town, which I did, and delivered them to lord Mulgrave; the day after my return into the country, I was sent for to wait upon lord Castlereagh, where I saw lord Chatham.

Can you state on what day it was you saw lord Chatham and lord Castlereagh?—I think it was on the 11th of June; I am quite certain it was on the Sunday after the King's birth-day.

Will you state what passed at that in-

terview relative to the Expedition?—I had an interview before lord Chatham came in with lord Castlereagh on the subject of the Expedition, and as nearly as I can recollect lord Castlereagh said there was a disposable force of from 30 to 35,000 men, and I think, but I am not quite certain, that he had transports ready to embark about 10,000, whether it was 10,000 ton of transports or transports for 10,000 men I cannot say; we had some general conversation on the subject of the Expedition, and I pressed as much as I possibly could the advanced state of the season; I also expressed an anxiety that the number of horses should be reduced to as low a standard as possible, as they take up a great deal of room; and I also submitted that as many troops as possible might be embarked in men of war, to prevent the Expedition being delayed by transports, as I knew from experience that transports were always the greatest clog to an expedition; some conversation passed about different landing-places, and about the march across the island of South Beveland, I do not recollect every particular of the conversation, but that was the general purport of it: if my memory has at all failed me, I shall be extremely glad to be corrected by the noble lord who is so near me now in his place.

With what view did you advert to the lateness of the season at the beginning of June?—Because it was my opinion, and I think I stated the same to my lord Mulgrave, that the Expedition ought to sail by the 26th or the 27th of June, for that was nearly about the full moon and the longest days, and that we were liable, if we remained beyond that time, to have to encounter the greatest of all difficulties in expeditions, the elements.

Were you consulted with upon any subsequent occasion upon the same subject?—I saw lord Mulgrave once or twice after that; I believe once, but I am not quite certain.

State the substance of any conversations you had with lord Mulgrave respecting the Expedition?—When I was sent for to lord Mulgrave, I believe lord Castlereagh was present; and the subject upon which I was particularly examined, was that of a landing place in the neighbourhood of Santvliet, and I was desired by lord Mulgrave to draw up a paper, stating, as nearly as I could, whereabouts I supposed a landing might be effected in the neighbourhood of Santvliet, which I

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did, I believe, while lord Castlereagh was in the room; it was signed by myself and by captain Plampin, who had been sent for to town, as he was acquainted with the navigation of the Scheldt, and had been consulted on that day previous to my being sent for. I think sir Richard Strachan, sir Richard Bickerton, and Mr. Wellesley Pole were present.

Can you state the substance of your opinion with respect to the practicability of effecting a landing near Santvliet?—I believe I had little hesitation in stating that a landing might be effected there; however, if that paper or a copy of that paper was to be produced to the Committee, my exact opinion at that time would be seen.

Is that the only memorandum of an opinion of yours as to the mode in which this Expedition could be carried into effect, which could be referred to?—I have already stated, that I delivered some memoranda to lord Mulgrave on this subject, though principally on my ideas of the necessary arrangement for carrying the Expedition into effect.

Are the memoranda official papers left with the admiralty, in such a way that they would be produced if ordered?—I think I gave them to the first lord.

Do you consider them as public papers, and not as public memorandas?—I should hardly conceive them to be private memoranda, when I was publicly sent for and examined,—there has been some doubt whether a return from the first lord was official; the first lord desired me to make out my opinion, and I was bound so to do; and if he had asked me as a public officer or as a private gentleman, I should have equally thought it my duty to do so.

Was the plan of operations, which was afterwards acted upon so far as it was found practicable, communicated to you, or were you consulted upon those final arrangements?—I certainly was accessory to the arrangements of the Expedition from having been examined a good deal by the commanders in chief of the army and navy, with respect to my local knowledge of that country.

Have you any knowledge of the situation and circumstances of Antwerp and the forts of Lillo, and the defences of the Upper Scheldt?—I was at Antwerp in 1794; I did not take much notice of the fortifications, as the principal communications I had were upon the sea face; I

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understood then that the works were very old, and that the ditch was dry in some places, but where I really do not know; with respect to the fort of Lillo, I expressed a regret in one of the memoranda, that I could not obtain sufficient information about that, and I believe I at the same time observed, that I heard that when the Brabanters, in 1798, were moving down towards Lillo, they did not express, as I understood, any doubt about getting possession of Lillo.

Did not the practicability of succeeding in the attempt upon Antwerp, depend very materially upon the being able to convey the fleet above the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeck?—In a previous answer I stated, that I was consulted upon the practicability of landing the army at Santvliet, which is five miles below Lillo.

Is the Committee to understand, you were never consulted with, with respect to the attack upon the naval arsenals at Antwerp?—I certainly had some conversation upon the subject; but as there is a probability of this paper being produced, I hope I shall be excused saying any thing upon that subject, because the view that I had on it then will be strongly expressed in the papers; if there is the least difficulty about the papers, I will then look at my own from which they were taken, and I will state distinctly to the Committee all that I have said upon the subject; and the only reason that I ask the indulgence of the Committee at this moment is, that I should be extremely sorry to have said any thing antecedent to the operations having taken place, that I would not if asked now: and if the noble lord had stated the substance of his examination, I would have brought my memoranda to the House this evening.

Were you well acquainted with the island of Walcheren, previous to the sailing of the Expedition?—As far as I could trust upon my memory from 1794 to the present time, and that I always stated in my papers.

Were you acquainted with the climate of Walcheren and the influence of the climate upon the inhabitants or upon troops that came there?—I always knew that it was subject to agues in the autumn; in 1794, I had an ague there myself in August, but I do not recollect that many of the inhabitants were then afflicted with that ague, nor do I think, though that may easily be seen, by making a return of the regiments that were there in 1794, that

they were by any degree afflicted so much as the regiments the last year.

Did you state any thing to lord Castlereagh or lord Chatham on the subject of the probable influence of the climate upon the troops at that season of the year?—I do not recollect that I stated any thing, but I remember that the subject was anticipated by one of the noble lords, I rather think it was lord Mulgrave, saying it was an unhealthy place, however that was a circumstance so generally known, that I do not know that I should have particularly called their attention to it, as the subject of their conversation with me was in general about local information.

Was that all that passed at that or any other interview, upon the subject of the climate?—I believe it was, but I really do not at present recollect.

Were any military opinions upon the subject of the Expedition submitted to your consideration by lord Castlereagh or lord Chatham?—I think a Memoir was given me to read by lord Chatham upon the subject of passing to Antwerp by the East Scheldt, and Tolen and Bergen-op-Zoom.

By whom was that Memoir written?—When I received it from lord Chatham to read, it was in his own house, and it was a confidential paper.

Independent of this Memoir, which you have termed a confidential paper, were any other opinions of military men or others submitted to your consideration by lord Mulgrave, lord Castlereagh, or lord Chatham?—I do not recollect that any others were.

By the term “confidential” do you mean to imply that this Memoir was in the nature of secret intelligence given by some person who might have been employed to collect the state of the enemy’s defence, or so forth, on the other side of the water; or was the Memoir delivered in by a military person or other in this country?—The Memoir was certainly written by a person in this country; lord Chatham put it into my hands to read; I received it from him in the most confidential manner, and I therefore thought it my duty to state distinctly to the Committee my embarrassment in giving up the name of the person which was confidentially put into my possession.

Was the Memoir put into your hand for the purpose of your making any comment or forming any opinion upon it?—I

rather think that the Memoir was put into my hand to shew how far a military opinion went with respect to the practicability of going to Antwerp by the route of the Eastern Scheldt.

• Did the Memoir contain a scheme for the Expedition, or any part of it?—It was certainly a Memoir upon all the military points from the East Scheldt to Antwerp.

Was there any intention on the part of lord Chatham to act upon the scheme contained in that Memoir?—I really cannot exactly answer that question; but I believe my lord Chatham had that Memoir under his consideration.

Was it a Memoir recommending the Expedition, or not?—I should rather think, but I am not quite certain; it was given me to read, and I read it in a very short time in his house; I rather think the Memoir assumed that the Expedition was settled upon, and pointed out all the ideas of the person that wrote it upon the subject of going by the Eastern Scheldt and Bergen-op-Zoom.

Was the suggestion contained in that Memoir ever acted upon, or were any dispositions made in order to act upon it?—Certainly the suggestions in that Memoir were not wholly acted upon, because the army did not land upon Tolen, which I think was the principal point of debarkation; but part of the army went up the Eastern Scheldt, which was a previous proposition to their landing upon Tolen.

Was the Memoir drawn up by an English officer, or an English subject?—By an English officer.

You have stated that the principal suggestion of that Memoir was not acted upon, because the army did not land upon Tolen; you have likewise stated, that the army went up the Eastern Scheldt, although it appears not for that service; did the armament proceed, or any part of it, up the Scheldt in consequence of suggestions of that Memoir, and for the purpose of effecting what it proposed?—If an army is to land upon Tolen, it must, I apprehend, go up the East Scheldt: part of the Expedition did go up the East Scheldt, and land part of the army at Tergoes and South Beveland.

Is not the place of landing mentioned by you upon quite the opposite side of the East Scheldt from Tolen, which this Memoir so strongly presses; and is not the landing that you mention upon South Beveland?—Certainly the landing was

upon South Beveland. South Beveland is opposite to Tolen; but all I meant to state was, that in either going to Tolen or going to South Beveland, upon that side the East Scheldt might be made use of.

Were there any further communications between you and lord Chatham, or any other of his Majesty's ministers, before the sailing of the Expedition?—I had frequent communications with lord Chatham, before I left London; but I do not recollect that, except the times I have mentioned, I saw lord Castlereagh more than once till I reached Deal.

Were you yourself employed in the Expedition?—I was.

In what capacity?—I was captain of the Venerable.

Were you in any other situation than captain of a private ship in the fleet?—I was going to state, that I was employed upon detached services by sir Richard Strachan; in the first instance, I carried the first division of the fleet into the Roompot, and returned and carried the second division into the Roompot, and then Sir Richard Strachan directed me to land with lord Chatham, and remain with him till he should give me further orders.

You have stated, that it was intended to land the army near Santvliet, will you state whether you reconnoitred the landing-place in the neighbourhood of Santvliet?—I believe I stated, that I was desired to give my opinion upon the practicability of landing at Santvliet; but I have no hesitation in saying, that as far as I was a judge, I thought it an excellent place.

Before the Expedition sailed from the Downs was there any delay, on any account, in the sailing of the Venerable; was she detained after the time that she should have sailed and would have sailed but for the circumstances that so detained her?—I believe three or four days before the Venerable did sail, a telegraphic communication came from the admiralty, directing that the Venerable, with two or three other ships, should sail; but as all the papers of the head quarters and part of the head quarters had I believe embarked, sir Richard Strachan made some arrangement for their remaining, to go with the body of the fleet, which arrangement I believe the Admiralty approved.

Did she sail with the body of the fleet?—She sailed some few hours before the body of the fleet.

She was not detained after that time by

any accident or circumstance whatever?—Not that I recollect.

You were consulted by the first lord of the admiralty and by the commander in chief of the Expedition and by the secretary of state for the war department, on the subject of the Expedition; was the plan resolved upon as that which was to be acted upon by the commanders of the land and naval forces in the Expedition, communicated to you at any time before the sailing of the Expedition?—Yes, it was.

At what time?—I believe I was acquainted with the general outline of the plan very soon after I was first sent for, which was early in June; but the detail of that plan was altered while we were at Deal.

The main objects to be accomplished by the proposed plan were in no sense given up or changed?—I apprehend the main objects were not given up by the alteration of the details; one mode was preferred to another of carrying the first part of the proposed plan into execution.

Were you apprized then that the possession of the island of Walcheren was to be the first object of the Expedition?—The original plan, as far as I recollect, had in its view to make the descent on Cadsand and Walcheren nearly similitudinous operations; if any difference, that difference was to be in favour of the descent on Cadsand, as the squadron for Cadsand rather preceded the squadron for Walcheren.

Was the object of occupying Cadsand, that of facilitating the occupation of Walcheren, and particularly of Flushing, or was it an object by itself?—The object of occupying Cadsand was to command more immediately the Weilen channel, to give an entrance into the Scheldt by that channel.

Was not the first object of entering the Scheldt the occupation of Walcheren, and particularly of Flushing?—I rather think that it was always intended that the first object should be Cadsand, to give us the command of the Weilen channel.

When you had the command of the Weilen channel, what was the next object, according to the plan submitted to you, of the Expedition?—To pass the ships and the transports that were not employed in carrying troops for the immediate object of making a descent upon Walcheren into the Western Scheldt by that channel. As I trust the paper that I laid before the admiralty may be laid before the House, if I should at all vary in

the opinion that I gave then, and what I state now, I trust it will be entirely attributed to my not exactly recollecting the precise detail I proposed for those arrangements.

From the printed papers laid before the House I collect that the first object of the Expedition was the occupation of Walcheren, and that the 15,000 men which the ships of war carried particularly were intended exclusively for that destination; did you understand at the time of the communication of the plan to you, that the occupation of Walcheren was so intended, and by such means as the paper laid before the House imports it was?—The first object of permanent possession was certainly Walcheren; Cadsand was never intended to be kept longer than sufficient to destroy the batteries, and to enable our ships to pass through the Weilen channel into the Western Scheldt, at least so I understood it; and I believe it will be found in the paper I mentioned, that I ventured to submit that idea to government.

As the plan was communicated to you, you knew that after Walcheren was occupied and Flushing was reduced, the ulterior objects of the Expedition were the destruction of the French fleet and the arsenals and naval works at Antwerp?—I certainly knew that the ulterior objects of the Expedition were the destruction of the French fleet, and the naval arsenals at Antwerp.

Did you consider at the time that the plan was thus communicated to you, that it would probably be necessary, for the accomplishment of those ulterior objects, to remove from Walcheren the force employed in the reduction of Flushing, before those ulterior objects could be accomplished?—No, I did not.

Then you considered the other parts of the force not employed in Walcheren as sufficient to accomplish those ulterior objects?—I considered the remaining part of the force, as far as I was able to judge, sufficient to proceed to the execution of the ulterior objects; though I always thought it possible, upon Flushing being closely invested, that part of the force originally destined for that service might be spared to reinforce that part of the army which was originally intended to proceed to the ulterior objects of the Expedition.

Did you understand at the time this communication was made to you, that

that part of the force not intended to occupy Walcheren or invest Flushing, was to proceed to the ulterior objects of the Expedition, before the surrender of the town of Flushing?—I so understood it.

• At the time of the communication of the plan to you, was any distinct account given you of the state of the fortifications, particularly of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and the other fortifications that must command or affect in different places, the passage of the Scheldt, or the state of the defences of Antwerp?—I have in some previous answers regretted, that I could not obtain any information with respect to Lillo, and I have said all I know with respect to the fortifications at Antwerp.

How, without your being able to obtain any knowledge of the state of Lillo or Liefkenshoeik, and knowing nothing of the state of Antwerp, beyond what you knew of it in the year 1794, are you able to come to a conclusion, that it was safe to advance the remainder of the force, not investing Flushing or occupying Walcheren, to proceed to the ulterior objects of the Expedition, namely to destroy the French fleet, and the naval arsenal at Antwerp?—Great part of that is a military question; I naturally concluded, that his Majesty's ministers would have been in possession of any new works that had been raised at Antwerp, and if they had decided before I was sent for, that they were to go from Santvliet, then the fleet would have had nothing to do with Lillo till after the army was in possession of that fortress.

Then your opinion of the propriety of making this attempt, with the part of the force not engaged in Walcheren, was founded on the confidence you placed in the information obtained by his Majesty's ministers?—I do not think I have exactly stated, that that was the only ground on which I did think that the remaining part of the force, for instance 20,000 men, might have proceeded; I certainly did hear that it was supposed there were no regular troops at that time in Antwerp, and that the Low Countries were never so bare of troops; this was the information I think I received from those of his Majesty's ministers with whom I talked, and it was on that presumption I thought it would be quite safe for an army of 20,000 men, exclusive of the aid they naturally would have derived from the fleet, to have proceeded towards Antwerp; because they must have had intelligence time enough

for them to have effected their retreat to the fleet, if any extraordinary number of troops had come down from the interior part of the country, or was on its march down; this is merely matter of opinion, which I stated to his Majesty's ministers and to several superior officers, and which opinion was founded on the best judgment I possessed.

Are there any other reasons that induced you to think it was a proper measure?—I trust that the Committee will never check an anxiety in a naval officer to destroy any part of the enemy's fleet if it is practicable to do so; I thought with that force it was possible to effect that object.

Had you any reason to believe that his Majesty's ministers had received any exact or accurate information of the state of the works of Antwerp at that time?—I really do not recollect that I had any positive reason to know that they had; but the general impression upon my mind after talking with them, was that Antwerp was in a defenceless state, and that there were very few troops in the Low Countries.

Was your impression of the defenceless state of Antwerp and the scarcity of troops in the Low Countries, such as to induce you to believe that Antwerp was open to a *coup de main*, and to be taken by assault without any regular approaches?—I do not recollect that I ever came to so close an examination of the point with his Majesty's ministers upon that subject.

Were you of opinion that that part of the force which was not required for the occupation of Walcheren, or the attack upon Flushing, might pass up to Santvliet having one bank of the Scheldt in our possession?—I know of nothing to prevent it.

Did you consider that the occupation of Cadsand, together with the occupation of South Beveland, would give us one bank of the Scheldt, for the purposes of navigating that river?—I have previously stated that the occupation of Cadsand would have given us an open channel into the West Scheldt; and in my last answer I said there was no difficulty in going up if we were in possession of Beveland.

Supposing the attack upon Cadsand had succeeded, should we not have been in possession of one bank of the Scheldt in the sense described on the evening of the 2d of August, the fort of Bathz included?—I have previously stated that that would have given us possession of one



bank of the river, and I understand that sir John Hope was in possession of the fort of Bathz on the night of the 2d of August.

Supposing that part of the force not required for service in Walcheren to be assembled at the mouth of the West Scheldt, at the rendezvous to which it was directed to proceed, how long, in your judgment, would it have required, if the wind was fair, and other circumstances favourable, to carry that force up as Santvliet?—With a fair wind, and every circumstance favourable, I suppose that the transports having that part of the force and the men of war might have got up within 48 hours.

Under favourable circumstances, in what time do you imagine that part of the armament not wanted for service in Walcheren might have been carried from the Downs to Santvliet?—With a fair wind, and every thing favourable, it certainly would not require more than 24 hours to carry the armament from the Downs to the entrance of the Scheldt.

Including the time that they might be detained at the rendezvous, is it too much to conclude, that under favourable circumstances the force might have been at Santvliet on the 4th or 5th day from the sailing from the Downs?—The two former answers are an answer to this question, with the exception of the time to be employed at the rendezvous.

What do you believe to have been the state of the enemy's force at Antwerp, on the 2d and 3rd of August last, from any information you may have received when on service?—I was so much employed on other points on the 2d and 3rd of August, that I had very little communication with head quarters.

Did you understand in point of fact, that there were not on the arrival of the English armament in the Scheldt, above a few hundred men stationed at Antwerp for its defence?—I do not recollect having seen any paper of communications to that effect at that time.

Did you understand that there were not above 200 men at that time, in the fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom?—I think I heard a report, that when we first appeared off the Scheldt there were not above 200 men in Bergen-op-Zoom, but that it was very soon after that reinforced.

From any observations you yourself made, or any information you received, have you reason to believe, that the enemy previous to the arrival of the

British Expedition off the Scheldt had made any extraordinary preparations for defence?—I heard that the enemy were in possession of an intention on the part of Great Britain to attack the island of Walcheren as early as April, and that they supposed the principal point of descent in the island of Walcheren would be in Zoutland Bay, where they were prepared to receive the first landing, and that was the reason that the plan of attack upon the island of Walcheren was changed.

You have alluded to the alarm entertained by the enemy in the month of April, did they expect an attack from this country in the month of July, when the armament actually sailed?—They did expect in the month of July such an attack by information that came over while lord Castlereagh was at Deal, for it was then that the plan of attack was changed, in consequence of the information that came over then that the enemy expected our landing there.

Did the alteration made in the plan of attack at Deal interfere in any degree with the prosecution of the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I am not aware that the change in the plan of attack upon the island of Walcheren at all interfered with the intention to prosecute the ulterior objects of the Expedition.

You have stated to the Committee your general impression of the situation of the works at Antwerp in the year 1794, from any information you received, either before you sailed on the late Expedition, or during your service in the Scheldt, have you any reason to believe, that previous to the arrival of the British armament in the Scheldt, the enemy had made any material alteration or improvement in the works of Antwerp subsequent to the year 1794?—I do not recollect that previous to our sailing I heard of any alteration, but when we were in the Scheldt there were various reports upon that subject, some that Antwerp was very defenceless, and others that the works had been repaired.

Do you know whether the enemy threw any troops over the Scheldt from Cadsand to Flushing, after the arrival of our army?—I understand they did.

Do you know the number of those?—I do not exactly know, but I believe upwards of 3,000; I believe the return is in some of the papers.

Do you know whether the 3,000 men, thrown over the Scheldt into Flushing,

was the whole amount of the enemy's troops in Cadsand?—I really do not know, but I should apprehend that they would hardly send every man away from that island, and leave it unprotected.

• Do you know what day those troops were thrown over?—I was employed upon a different service, but as nearly as I can recollect, I understood that no troops passed over after the 6th or the 7th of August.

Do you know the breadth of the channel that separates Cadsand from the rest of Flanders?—I have never measured it myself, but I consider it to be very nearly three miles and a half.

You have stated that you are not aware that the alteration which took place in the plan of attack at Deal, made any difference as to the ultimate object of the Expedition; did that change make any alteration in the practicability of obtaining the ultimate objects of the Expedition?—It is necessary for me, in stating the grounds upon which the alteration was made, and the extent to which that alteration would have gone under ordinary circumstances, to state, that if there was any difference in the practicability of the ulterior objects, that the difference did not arise from the alteration of the plan, but that it arose from the circumstances of the weather. The plan was changed from a landing in Zoutland Bay to a landing about Domburg, by which means the whole of the fleet would have been at an anchor in the Stone Deep, and would have had an open sea to have gone into the Scheldt after the debarkation had taken place upon Domburg, but when Domburg Beach was examined, there was so great a surf that it was quite impossible to land a man there, and it blew so extremely hard that there was great apprehension many of the transports might part their cable and get on shore, and that in all probability most of the gunboats would have foundered at their anchors, and on that account it was proposed, as originally mentioned as the alternative in the original plan, in case such a circumstance of wind and weather should arise, that the whole fleet should go into the Roompot, where a landing was effected without any difficulty, and without the loss of a single man.

You have stated, that in your opinion the ultimate objects of the Expedition might have been attained, by the proceeding of such of the troops as were not employed in the investiture of Flushing

up the Scheldt to Santvliet, from whence they might have gone to Antwerp, and that there were very few troops in Antwerp; are you aware that in that, as well as other parts of the French dominions, there is a very strong national guard for the defence of the country?—I am aware that there is a national guard, but I did not know that it was so strong in the Low Countries as it is in France; at the same time I never made any particular enquiries about it; and the opinion which I gave upon the practicability, as far as it struck me, of proceeding with so large a force, was merely the opinion of a naval officer upon a military question; and therefore if that opinion was erroneous, it will not, I hope, be an impeachment of any professional opinion I may give.

Did you conceive that that corps of troops could have advanced for the purpose of obtaining the ultimate objects of the Expedition without investing or disposing the forts and fortifications upon the Scheldt, between Santvliet and Antwerp?—I think it might only have been necessary for a small corps to have masked Lillo, if it should have been deemed inexpedient to pass it.

As you conceive that a small corps out of the original corps landed at Santvliet must have been left to have masked fort Lillo, do you conceive the ultimate object of the Expedition, namely the destruction of the French fleet, and of the bason and arsenals at Antwerp, could have been obtained without your troops having previously obtained possession of the fortifications at Antwerp?—I think it would have been necessary for us to have obtained possession of the fortifications at Antwerp, unless it should have appeared when the river was opened, that it was possible to have stormed the town on the sea-face during the night.

Does that opinion extend to the occupation of the citadel, or only the works of the town?—Where it is possible to move a fleet two or three miles, the movement of that fleet might change any opinion that could be previously given. If the fleet was lying at the lower part of the town of Antwerp, I think it would have been possible to have destroyed the fleet without possession of the citadel, if we were in possession of the river; but if the fleet lay above the citadel, I do not apprehend the fleet could have been destroyed without the general commanding

the troops conceiving the force in Antwerp was so small as to justify his masking it, or passing it, and going round with his army to erect batteries to destroy that fleet.

Then I am to understand you as expressing your opinion, that it was possible the ultimate object of the Expedition was to be obtained, first, by masking fort Lillo, and then by masking the town and citadel of Antwerp?—I do not know that I have exactly said quite so much, nor do I mean it to be so understood.

I understood you to express an opinion, that there was a possibility of the existence of a case in which the object of the Expedition was to be obtained by the general commanding the troops passing round the town and citadel of Antwerp, and erecting batteries to bear upon the ships above the citadel of Antwerp?—That only as a possible case.

I understand you conceive a case in which it might be necessary for the officer commanding our troops to get possession of and occupy the works of Antwerp; state whether you had in contemplation the possibility of a corps of the size you describe, taking those works by escalade or by assault, or had in contemplation their opening ground before them?—That would entirely depend upon military opinions, which in course, would be resorted to on the occasion referred to in this question, before any decision on the subject.

State your opinion, whether you conceive it possible for any fleet of ships to make their way up the Scheldt between Lillo and Antwerp, unless both banks of the Scheldt are in possession of the army acting with that fleet?—As this is a professional question, I can distinctly state my opinion without any reservation whatever. It is only necessary for me to say, that we passed eight or nine sail of battle ships close to Bathz, and that one was advanced within three miles and a half of Lillo, which was as high as it was thought necessary to go, until it was decided that the army would co-operate in endeavouring to get possession of the forts of Lillo and Lietkenshoeck, for under the circumstances as they appeared to us when we were lying close to Lillo, it was impracticable for the navy to attempt to force the boom, and to proceed higher up till the army was in possession of the banks of the river.

Both banks?—Certainly, in the first

instance Lillo, and Lietkenshoeck; I beg to add, however, that if the army had been in possession of Lillo, and the bank of the river on which Lillo was placed, that it might be possible with a fair wind to have passed by Liefkenshoeck if it was absolutely necessary, or if it was indispensably necessary to the accomplishment of the ulterior objects of the Expedition, provided we could get any pilots who were sufficiently acquainted with the rivers above Lillo to take charge of the ships as far as they were wanted to go, and that there was no other works on the bank of the river.

Did the Expedition sail on the supposition that the enemy's fleet, in case of necessity, could, or could not run up above Antwerp?—I believe it was supposed that the enemy's fleet could go up to Antwerp, I do not know that I ever heard it stated it could go up above Antwerp, nor did I absolutely know they would attempt; it did not strike me there was sufficient water, though I never sounded it, going only up and down with small vessels.

Did the Expedition sail upon the supposition that the enemy's fleet could not run up above Antwerp?—I do not recollect exactly whether I have heard it could run above Antwerp; if I had been asked, I should have stated that I did not recollect to have sounded above Antwerp, and therefore could not absolutely say whether the fleet could go up above Antwerp, though I believe it could go a little above the town.

Do you know whether our Expedition sailed on the supposition that the enemy's fleet could or could not run up above the town of Antwerp?—I believe when the Expedition sailed every body was aware that the fleet might run up to Antwerp, and it is possible that many people might be aware that it could run higher up, but I do not believe that the circumstance was much agitated about its running up above Antwerp; it will be seen by the papers, as far as I know myself; I believe many people have thought they might go above Antwerp, if any body had asked me whether they could go much above Antwerp, I should have said I believed not much, but it is now found that they can go above it.

In point of fact, did not the enemy's fleet run up above Antwerp?—Part of the fleet went up above Antwerp while I was lying at Lillo; I think five sail of the line; I could bring accurate information of the number if it is desired.

You have stated that your attention was

very naturally confined during your stay at Antwerp in 1794, to the sea faces of the fortification, do you conceive from your knowledge of those faces, that our fleet could lie within range of shot from those faces in case of a joint attack from the army and the navy?—The river is not above three quarters of a mile broad there, I do not think it is quite so much; and I do not recollect that there were any works at all upon the sea face, though there might have been works; there was one small work, called I believe Fort St. Laurent, at the lower part of the town. I will state what my general habits and communications were with that place: there were a vast number of transports for army baggage and forage, and I was there a few days superintending the embarkation of that from the wharfs, and I do not recollect seeing any works; we landed at high water, without the use of scarce any steps, and very near the top of the wharfs.

Did not the Expedition sail in ignorance of the strength of the works at Lietkenshoeck, and was not that a *fleur du batery*?—All I can say upon the subject of Lietkenshoeck is that I believe it to be commanded by Lillo, and I think when once in possession of Lillo, Lietkenshoeck may be very much annoyed from it. I am not quite certain as to the correctness of that position, but I believe it to be the case.

My question is, whether the Expedition did not sail under ignorance of there being any works at Lietkenshoeck?—I think from the paper I had put in, it will be seen, that I mentioned Lietkenshoeck on that paper.

From your observations of the forts of Lillo and Lietkenshoeck, what should you estimate the garrison necessary for the defence of those forts to be?—I had little opportunity of making any observations upon either Lillo or Lietkenshoeck, for I was not nearer than two miles and a half or three miles from Lillo.

Do you conceive that Lillo is a larger work than the fort of Bathz?—I should apprehend that it is; however, from the engineer who examined it, the Committee will be able to obtain probably better information.

You have stated, that if an English army was in possession of Fort Lillo and the right bank of the river, even if the enemy was in possession of the left, it was possible for the English fleet to sail up the

river; how broad is the river two miles above Lillo?—I believe I stated that if we were in possession of Lillo, and that it was absolutely or indispensably necessary for some ships to pass to obtain the ulterior objects of the Expedition, and on the presumption that there was no great force in the country, nor any strong works after we had passed the fort of Lietkenshoeck, that I did not conceive the navy would not refuse to pass that fort to obtain these objects; I say presuming that there are no other works upon the left bank of the river, for I know of none there.

State the breadth of the river two miles above Lillo?—I should think that the river would not be above three quarters of a mile broad there.

State the breadth of the river of Antwerp?—Probably it may be something less, we can accurately measure it upon the last French service.

Is it not your opinion that the dykes upon the banks of that river, what we call embankments, are a perfect breast work for infantry, and where guns may be brought up completely protected in any part of them?—I am aware that guns may be brought up, but they would be equally exposed to the fire from the men of war and flotilla, particularly at high water; but this is only my opinion: no operation whatever, probably, would have been undertaken upon my opinion, and it would be well to refer to the opinions of senior officers upon that subject; I only go to the passing of the fort of Lietkenshoeck, and on the presumption that there is no force in the country, consequently no guns could be brought up.

You have stated that you did not know whether the fleet might not be carried above the citadel of Antwerp, do you recollect what is the depth of the water marked upon that chart with which the navy was furnished upon the sailing of the Expedition?—I do not immediately recollect it, but I could refer to it if it is desired.

Is it not marked immediately above the citadel of Antwerp as 26 feet deep?—It is very possible it may.

Is not the depth of the river marked upon the chart, the depth of the river at low water?—The depth of the river upon all charts is marked at low water, unless otherwise expressed.

Do you know how many feet the tide rises at Antwerp?—I should suppose in ordinary spring tides eighteen feet.

(N)

[The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

5.

*Veneris, 9<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right. Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

[The following Papers were read.]

Memoranda by General BROWNRIGG; dated  
9th June 1809.

*Copy of a LETTER from Major General  
Brownrigg, to the Commander in Chief:  
—dated Horse Guards, 2d June 1809.*

“Sir;—In obedience to your orders, directing me to put on paper, in a cursory manner, general circumstances that occur relative to landing an army of 30,000 men, with their equipment, on the Flemish coast, and thence proceeding by land to Antwerp by the route of Malines, and the probability of their return, either by the same route or by any other; I have the honour to state, with the greatest deference, what appear to me would be those circumstances and the probable result.—I shall suppose the force to consist of 5,000 cavalry and 25,000 infantry, and that Ostend is seized upon as the most convenient point of debarkation, affording the only place calculated for a depot on the coast, and from whence the army could most easily commence its operations. Supposing the army attended by the most contracted proportion of artillery and commissariat train; and taking it for granted that the army would be able to forage itself on the route; that the troops are without tents and blankets, and that the soldiers carry their camp kettles; the number of horses to be taken with the Expedition would necessarily be as follows: Cavalry, 5,000; Artillery, 1,500; Commissariat Train, sufficient to carry four days bread, being ninety waggons, at four horses each, 360; General and Regimental Staff, 700; Hospital Waggon, two to every 1,000 men, at four horses each, 240. Total 7,800.—A period of five days would probably elapse before the army found itself in a state to move forward, after having possessed itself of Ostend, as that time would be occupied in landing horses and stores, collecting boats, and making other necessary arrangements.—The route would be

as follows, advantage being taken of the water-conveyance by the canal of Bruges;

	Leagues.	Days.
To Bruges .....	6	1
To Ghent, by Belem, keeping the line of the canal .....	12	2
The Citadel of Ghent being a respectable fortification, and the town difficult to approach from the defence, that its high ramparts, dyke, and canal affords, its reduction ought not to be calculated upon less than .....	0	3
To Oordighem .....	4	1
To Ashe, by Alost .....	5	1
To Malines, by Vilverde .....	5½	1
To Antwerp .....	6	1
Supposed detention at Ostend .	0	5
	38½	15

“But if the enemy is enabled to assemble a force sufficient materially to obstruct the progress of the march at particular points, and that the people of the country are hostile, which may also be expected, it is hardly probable that the army can reach Antwerp in less than fifteen days after its landing. That it may penetrate that distance, under the presumption of the absence of the French armies in Germany, cannot be doubted; but so much time would be afforded to the enemy to assemble troops from Holland, and the fortified places immediately in the vicinity of Antwerp, that it being able to effect its object is by no means certain; should it not do so, a retreat by the route which it took in its advance seems nearly impossible, as an army must be expected to be formed in its rear of the militia and gens d’armes of the country, and from the garrisons of at least 20 fortified towns of West Flanders, none of which are at a greater distance than seven days march from Ghent, which would be retaken, and would probably be the point of assembly, while it would be pursued by that which opposed it at Antwerp.—If I am justified in the foregoing reasoning, it appears that the loss of the whole force is risked by such an undertaking. But if the destruction of the enemy’s arsenals at Antwerp, and his fleet in the Scheldt, is the object in view, I am humbly of opinion, that this can only be effected by our fleet being able to sail up the Scheldt, having 10,000 troops on board, to land occasionally, to possess forts and batteries placed to ob-

struct the navigation.—Should this be deemed impracticable, the possession of the island of Walcheren seems the most likely step to lead to the accomplishment of what is so much to be desired. By possessing the anchorage of Flushing, the enemy's fleet in the Scheldt would be rendered useless, and exposed to such modes of attack as might from that point be devised for its destruction. It would operate as a diversion in favour of the north of Germany, by preventing the Dutch from sending troops to that quarter, and might encourage the spirit of discontent, which it is believed must still exist in the united provinces. Probably 15,000 men would be an ample force for the capture of Walcheren. Ten thousand might be sufficient to maintain it, with the assistance of the navy, and a disposable corps would remain to be employed against the enemy in the Scheldt and neighbouring islands, as opportunity offered. Should it be thought right from thence to attempt the destruction of the arsenals at Antwerp, a force passing over to South Beveland would take possession of Sandvliet on the main land, and from thence, the distance to Antwerp being about six leagues, might succeed in taking it by a *coup de main*; or, being masters of Western Scheldt, the force of this enterprise might proceed by sea to Sandvliet. I have, &c.

(Signed) "ROBERT BROWNRIGG."

*Memoranda by General ALEXANDER HOPE;  
dated Horse Guards, 1st June 1809.*

"In the following observations it is assumed, that the danger is acknowledged of attempting an internal operation on the continent without a previous participation in continental resources.—That the difficulty is admitted, of landing and equipping an army upon a hostile coast, as also that of feeding its future operations by resources to be deprived from shipping.—It is further assumed, that the extent of preparation required has been duly weighed—that the force employed is adequate to its object; and that the means of transport are such as to convey with the army its requisites of movement and of existence.—Laying aside, therefore, these primary but indispensable considerations, the operation which it is proposed to consider is an advance upon Antwerp, with a view to destroy the maritime resources of the enemy in the Scheldt.—For the attainment of this object, one of two plans may be pursued: It being taken for granted

that armaments to carry on two distinct lines of operation at the same time could not be provided. The one is—landing upon the coast of Flanders, there to secure a post preparatory to the equipment of an army, in order to effect the conquest of a district of country sufficient to give temporary possession of Antwerp, and the left bank of the Scheldt. The other—to overwhelm, by the combined operation of a large naval and military force, the islands of Walcheren and North and South Beveland, with a view of proceedings which shall hereafter be described.—Upon the comparative merits of two such plans, the following observations arise: In a landing on the coast of Flanders is to be observed, the absence of any port adequate to receive and give security to a large armament;—next, the difficulty of the country through which the military operation is to be conducted, and the facility with which the enemy would improve its natural obstacles. Lastly—The time which would be afforded him for this purpose, as also to collect his force, by the delay necessarily attending the equipment (after landing) of a large army.—It will also immediately occur to any military man, that an army which had once made its point upon the coast of Flanders, would be exposed to the accumulated force, not only of the enemy in the Netherlands, and French Flanders, but also to the army in Holland, which would be conveyed across the islands of Zealand, or through the different channels which divide them, to the left bank of the Scheldt.—Upon the other hand it is to be observed, that by preferably possessing the islands which have been named, and consequently the passages of the Scheldt, the force of Holland would alone be opposed to us, in the first instance—that of Flanders having a circuitous movement to make by Malines to Antwerp.—In Flushing also we should obtain a port adequate to receive the armament, and in the island of Walcheren a dépôt calculated to place in security the extended resources which must accompany the army.—The possession of South Beveland would add to these resources, secure naval co-operation along the greater part of the Western Scheldt, and bring the troops without any other risk than what attends the first operation of possessing Walcheren, and it, within a shorter distance of the main object in view.—If it is objected, that the possession of these islands still necessitates another embarkation

previous to the main attempt; it is to be remembered, that it also gets rid in a great degree, of the multiplied difficulties and danger attending the former operation from its infancy.—With a view to the retreat of the army, much security also is thus gained by a close connection with the navy, and by an insular position being maintained, from whence to re-embark the troops and stores in comparative security.—When to these local advantages is superadded, that, by possessing the islands on the Scheldt, a part at least of the object of the Expedition is obtained in the outset, whilst all or nothing is the alternative attending a landing in Flanders; when it is also borne in view, that our force once committed in Flanders, the enemy may again pass his ships down the Scheldt, from Antwerp or Terneuse to Flushing, or some other situation not depending upon the left bank of that river—it is presumed that the more brilliant, but more precarious plan of landing in Flanders, will give way to the different considerations which favour the occupation of the islands in Zealand.—It is then to be considered, in the event of the latter plan being adopted, what are the general operations which might be attempted.—In the first place, the force is supposed sufficient for the occupation, at the same moment, of Walcheren and the islands of North and South Beveland, so as to possess the country between the Eastern and Western Scheldt, and thereby facilitate the progress of the smaller vessels of our navy, and ensure the capture of whatever boats and naval resources were placed upon the shores of these islands.—Should this operation succeed, and a considerable quantity of schuyts and boats be collected, it might then be investigated how far it was practicable to take advantage of a flowing tide; and by an embarkation from the point of South Beveland, highest up the river, attempt Antwerp by a *coup de main*, landing at the same time smaller bodies of troops at Zandvliet on the right, and some corresponding point on the left bank of the Scheldt, to spread alarm, and operate as a diversion in favour of the main operation.—The flotilla on its progress up the Scheldt would necessarily be accompanied by gun boats, which should attempt to check the forts and batteries on either side of the river.—The capture of forts Lillo and Liefenshoeck would be of great importance to the security of retreat.—Such an operation, it is evident, would be attempt-

ed with great risk to the force employed, without, perhaps, any adequate security to the attainment of its object: at the same time, if executed with decision immediately after the occupation of South Beveland, (supposing the enemy unprepared) it might have some chance of success.—It is material to observe, that the possession of Walcheren is presupposed, at least so far as to have the command of such batteries as might affect the entrance of the fleet into the Scheldt; Flushing and Middleburgh, if not captured, being placed in a state of blockade.—It is however presumed, that the intention of possessing these islands would not be limited to the possibility of this operation, the practicability of which would be ascertained within a few days of landing, such an enterprise not requiring the complete equipment of the army.—A continental operation, for which the island of Zealand was the intended depôt, would render it expedient to possess the island of Tholen, in addition to those named, thereby to obtain a command of the narrow passage betwixt that island and the main land in the vicinity of Bergen-op-Zoom.—The disadvantage of such a line of operation upon Antwerp, would be the vicinity of that fortress. On the other hand, if it could be masked, the line is shorter, the country more open for cavalry, and presenting altogether fewer obstacles to the march of an army in all its branches, than that betwixt Antwerp and the coast of Flanders.—The capture of Bergen-op-Zoom by blockade or otherwise, would ensure the tranquil possession of the island of Zealand, and open views of a nature more extended than it is the object of this paper to consider.—Ostend is 66 and Nieuport is 75 miles in the shortest line from Antwerp; Bergen-op-Zoom is 24 miles only from the latter place. Further; let it be considered that the risk and serious difficulties of the army commence upon the coast of Flanders where it lands; in the other case, that the army proceeds in comparative security until it crosses from the island of Tholen.—In the Flanders plan, the die is cast at landing, and the risk of losing the army cannot but be run. But in what is proposed for Zealand, no continental risk arises, until the army quits Tholen, before which, time is gained to acquire information; and the operation against Antwerp need not be undertaken, if it is deemed that any very serious consequence is likely to attend its failure.—

Lastly.—Upon the general subject it may be remarked, that should an Expedition end with the temporary possession of the islands of Zealand, a considerable diversion in the cause of the continent would still be effected, by placing an army in a situation from whence it alike threatens Holland and Flanders, whilst it necessarily must capture the enemy's maritime resources in such islands of Zealand as are occupied, and possibly afford the opportunity of attempting from thence his smaller arsenals upon the left bank of the Scheldt.

E. W. C. R. OWEN, Esq. Captain of His Majesty's Ship the *Clyde*, was called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Did you not command a division of the fleet employed in the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—I did.

State under what instructions you sailed?—My first instruction is detailed in the printed papers, it went to the capture of the Island of Cadsand, and afterwards to the blocking of the Ghent channel; I received another instruction, which does not appear in these papers, which were given in consequence of the change of plan that recommended discretion in proceeding, as it was probable the enemy's naval force might in the first instance be directed immediately to Cadsand.

What is the date of the latter instruction?—I think the 26th of July; I received it in duplicate.

Have you got the duplicate?—I have it, but not with me; I have a copy which I can furnish, but the original I can get in the course of to-morrow.

By whom were those instructions given?—By Sir Richard Strachan.

[Captain Owen read, and then delivered in the instruction referred to, viz.]

“ (Copy—20.)—(Most Secret.)

*Amethyst, in Downs, 26th July 1809.*

Sir; As the enemy has moved his fleet to Flushing, I have abandoned the idea of making a descent on the S. W. side of Walcheren; I have determined to do it from the anchorage of Stone Deep and Banjaart, towards the coast between Sconce Point and the town of Cam Veere. —In consequence of this determination, the enemy may in the first instance, detach his flotilla towards Cadsand. You will therefore, being apprised of this, use your own discretion about landing, I mean if a great naval opposition is offered; and

that you, and the marquis of Huntley, think it running too much risk to land, you are not to do it till a convenient and safe opportunity should offer, keeping it always in your recollection, that it is of the greatest importance to obtain possession of Cadsand, when it can be done without that risk to which I have alluded. I remain, Sir, &c. R. J. STRACHAN.”

“ *Capt. Owen, Clyde.*”

I will not pledge myself exactly to the date, for one came without a date, and I may have filled it up with the date when I received it: one came late in the evening of the 26th, and the other early in the morning of the 27th.

Relate what you did in consequence of those instructions, as far as relates to the operation against Cadsand.—My original instruction had been communicated to lord Huntley on the moment that I received it; the second was communicated when his lordship embarked on the evening of the 27th. My lord Huntley also shewed me his instructions, and a question arose as to the number of men that could be landed; lord Huntley's instructions supposed that I had the means of landing 2,000 men at one operation; I had not the means for that number; the number for the men of war was 615, at the rate that we calculated the boats to carry them; but from some other means which I discovered, that number was carried to 700; The transports boats, if the weather had been fit for them to act, would have doubled that number. My lord Huntley was anxious to see the commander in chief of the army, or general Brownrigg, the adjutant general, to have those orders explained; and as early as the tide served on the morning of the 28th, I furnished him with a vessel to go to the commander in chief. It will be necessary to say I had been detached a day or two before, and lay at an anchorage not immediately in the Downs.—Lord Huntley, I understood, joined the *Venerable*, where the commander in chief was, just as she was getting under way, and was directed to follow her through the Gull Stream, and that she would heave to when she was clear of the Narrows; she passed me where I was laying, following the *Venerable*, but the weather was then very foggy; I knew that orders must be in their way to me to get under way, and I had great fear of losing the vessel that lord Huntley was in, and that the troops would be left without their general, I therefore recalled



her. I received my orders very shortly afterwards to weigh and proceed with the division; we anchored that night off Blankenburg, in a fair position for proceeding to Cadsand in the morning; whilst the squadron was getting under way in the morning for that purpose, I had again a conversation with lord Huntley on the subject of the 2,000 men that were expected to be landed, and likewise upon the cautionary order; his lordship wished to see the generals of the division under him, generals Dyot and Montesor, and they came on board; in consequence of lord Huntley's instruction and my order to use discretion, it was determined that the transports should anchor low down in the channel, whilst I proceeded further up into a situation from which I could notice what passed either in the channel I occupied, or the other entrance to Flushing called the Duerloo; my reason for taking that position was, that I was given to understand my lord Gardner, with a squadron of line-of-battle ships then before Flushing, was to co-operate with me and to follow me through the Channel by which I entered: I observed that his lordship's squadron was not in a situation to follow me through that channel, and that if I had co-operation from it, it could be by the channel of the Duerloo. The 29th, the day that I entered the channel, it blew too strong for boats to land, there was too much surf upon the beach; disposition was made for landing on the morning of the 30th at dawn of day. It was intended to take the last part of the ebb tide in-shore and to land at low water, which was between nine and ten o'clock; but a question arose as to the number of men that I could actually put on shore. It blew then too strong for the transport boats to act. The means of the men of war, were, as I said before, limited to seven hundred, and my lord Huntley did not think, with the instruction that he had, that he ought to risk the landing with so small a force, especially, as I could not insure the boats returning with a second number of men under an hour; I think that it would have been considerably more; I stated an hour at the time. On the evening of the 29th, I had a letter from sir Richard Strachan, and I returned an answer, pressing upon him, that my lord Huntley expected a greater force to land than I had the means of putting on shore. On the evening of the 30th, I had another letter from sir Richard

Strachan, desiring me to suspend our operations upon that side, until we had better help; my lord Gardner's squadron was at that time at the entrance of the Duerloo. On the morning of the 31st, another disposition was made for landing, and measures were taken for running the transports with two regiments, on shore, to facilitate the operation; but the enemy were then in considerable force, and it was still judged better to wait for the assistance of lord Gardner's boats; I therefore sent a letter to his lordship, informing him that it was for his boats that he waited; and in return, his lordship sent me an extract from his instructions, in which it appeared, he was ordered to remain where he was: the conclusion I drew from that order was, that it was intended we should proceed further: and an arrangement was made for that purpose.

Do you know what prevented lord Gardner's co-operating with you in the first instance, as was intended?—From the situation the ships were in when I came off Blankenburg, it was clear they could not get to the Weilen Channel; it then blew too hard, and they were to the leeward.

You state the French to have been the next day in considerable force in Cadsand; can you form any idea of what amount of force you could distinguish?—About noon on the 30th, a signal was made to me, that the enemy were bringing down field-pieces; and on the evening of the 30th, another signal was made to me for enemy's troops, in a situation where they could be annoyed by gun-vessels. I went immediately to the ship which made the signal, but the soldiers were then not to be seen; they had taken post behind the sand-hills, and in a battery on one flank of the beach where we intended to land; the report of the officers of that ship, made them twelve or fourteen hundred that had been seen; we saw men arriving in small parties of 50 and 100 on the following day, but we could form no judgment of the whole force upon the island.

You stated, that you then imagined you were intended for a further destination; what further destination did you understand to be intended?—I concluded to pass into the Scheldt, and on the 2d of August I did receive an order to be ready to pass in under cover of the line-of-battle ships which sir Richard Strachan informed me it was his intention to lead in.

Have the goodness to state what were your subsequent operations.—The letter I have alluded to of the 2d of August, directed me to proceed as near to Flushing as I could without exposing the transports to risk from the enemy's fire, and to endeavour to cut off the communication between Cadsand and Flushing. I pushed forward some of the vessels that same night, but I was too late for the whole division to move, and guard boats were likewise sent for the same purpose; on the 3d the whole division moved as near as they could, without being exposed to the enemy's fire. I on that evening received an order to send back the division of troops with my lord Huntley, to the Veere Gat, but to remain myself for the purpose that had been before directed. On that same day I observed vessels passing between Flushing and Cadsand, and sent the boats in chace of them; the vessels escaped, I believe, by running up the Scheldt, and the brig whose signal I made to cover the boats was disabled in attempting to rejoin me, in consequence of a shift of wind; she afterwards ran on shore on the Ellebogg, outside of Flushing; the next morning I sent vessels to her assistance, and when she floated, went down and took that position myself; it was a position upon the end of the Ellebogg which divides the channels of the Weilin and the Duerloo; I considered it a good position for assisting in the blockade of Flushing, and I held that station the rest of the siege. The statement that I give in this manner upon recollection is imperfect, but the commander in chief has a ready call upon all the commanders of divisions for narratives; mine has been delivered, and of course he is now in possession of my detailed narrative of the whole proceedings.

Do you know whether, after you had taken that position at the end of the Ellebogg, any vessels did pass from Cadsand to Flushing, or was the blockade complete?—The blockade was by no means complete; on the 6th several vessels passed over full of troops; I saw them preparing, and had the men of war ready to get under way after them: at the instant of their putting off, the Nymphen and the Zenobia weighed by signal from me, but the run was so short and the wind so strong, that the vessels got across in spite of them; some gun-boats came down from the Slough, but also too late to cut them off; they took a position, which

would prevent any more vessels passing; but it came to blow so strong that the gun-boats were driven from that station, and were obliged to seek shelter in the Slough. The same vessels had attempted on the evening of the 6th also, to return to Cadsand; they were all cut off but one schuyt and one boat, and returned again to Flushing; that schuyt on the following morning returned again to Flushing, full of troops, after the gun-boats had been driven from their station. That was the last reinforcement that got in; from that time, I consider the blockade to have been complete.

Do you imagine, that if such had been your instructions in the first instance, or if you had been provided with any different description of force, it could have been possible to have invested Flushing on the sea side without occupying Cadsand?—It blew very strong between the 3d and the 7th of August, too strong for gun-boats to have remained in that channel for the greater part of the time; any other class of vessels would have been much exposed to the enemy's fire. A blockade without possession of Cadsand must certainly have been very doubtful.

You state, that on the 30th it blew too strong to land troops from the transports boats; could troops have been landed with safety by any other description of boats on that day?—They could have been landed from the men of war's boats; the difficulty from the transports boats was not from the want of safety, but the wind blowing extremely hard directly off the land, and their means of towing not being great, they would not make much progress, and there was danger of their being drifted under the batteries which were at the other extremity of the beach where it was intended to land.

If you had been provided with a sufficient number of boats of a competent description, could you have effected a landing in sufficient force for the purposes of the Expedition, on the 30th?—The question was to land 2,000 men; for that we must have had a much greater force of men of war; the men of war we had, had their full complement of boats, as many as they could well carry.

What was your destination after the surrender of Flushing?—After the surrender of Flushing, I was detached with a small squadron to the side of Browsershaven upon Schowen.

Are the Committee to understand, that

the projected operation of the landing 2,000 men of lord Huntley's division was defeated for the want of a proper description of boats?—I was never prepared to expect that it was necessary that 2,000 men should be landed, I never heard of such an expectation until lord Huntley had embarked, and all the arrangements had been made for some days.

Did you understand from lord Huntley that he had an expectation of being able to land 2,000 men at one operation?—Never, until the evening of the 27th.

But on the evening of the 27th you did understand so?—Certainly on the evening of the 27th; but as I have stated the arrangements were made some days before, on the 24th, I gave my instructions to the captains under me, and on the 25th I sent a copy of those instructions to my Commander in Chief.

Was the squadron under your command provided with flat boats for landing the troops, in addition to your own boats?—It was.

State as far as you know the designation of the fire ships under the command of captain Tomlinson destined towards Walcheren, so far as belongs to the present question?—Those vessels formed no part of the squadron under my orders, they joined me in the Weilen channel, and I attached a gun brig to them for their protection; of their subsequent movements I know nothing.

Can you form any opinion of the number of troops that were transported from Cadsand to Walcheren, on the 6th of August and the following day?—The number was considerable, but I cannot judge of them.

As nearly as you can state it, what do you suppose it to be?—Report states the whole reinforcement drawn from Cadsand at three regiments; the vessels employed, I should think capable of carrying about two thousand men; but that is surmise, I have nothing to guide my judgment.

Do you know the date of the instructions of which lord Gardner sent you an extract?—The extract from the instruction to remain where his lordship then was, was without date.

Can you state what is the distance between Cadsand and the main land on the south-west side of Cadsand?—I have no knowledge of that side of Cadsand.

Can you state whether, supposing lord Gardner's instructions prevented him from moving the squadron to your assistance,

the boats of lord Gardner's squadron might not have been said to assist in that landing?—It blew strong at times, but the boats might have been sent at times.

After the reinforcements had crossed over from Cadsand to Flushing had you an opportunity of observing the remaining force at Cadsand?—I had not; the enemy was in force there.

Is the Committee to infer from thence that they were in such force as to prevent a disembarkation from your division if it had been found necessary?—Previous to those reinforcements passing over, lord Huntley's division of the army had been ordered to the Veer Gat, and was gone.

State the amount or the probable amount according to your estimation, of the force that might have remained at Cadsand?—I can give no idea of the probable force; I saw there were troops, but of the number I could form no judgment, I never saw them in bodies; the batteries were all occupied.

If your means of landing the troops had been reinforced with all the boats of admiral lord Gardner's squadron, what number of men do you imagine it would have been in your power to have landed?—I have not formed a calculation of the number of boats from lord Gardner's squadron, for I actually do not know the ships that composed it.

Were the batteries on the coast of Cadsand in such number and of such a description as to render it very difficult for troops to land upon that island?—The batteries were not strong on the part of Cadsand; where I was the troops might have been covered well, but the tides were very strong, and there was danger if boats could not move rapidly across it, that they might be drifted within the fire of those batteries.

Is the Committee to understand that there are parts of the island of Cadsand where troops might be landed without being exposed to the fire of any batteries whatever?—No, but the troops might have been covered by the ships of war.

Under all circumstances you are in possession of, do you think it would have been advisable in a military point of view, to have attacked the French at Cadsand?—It certainly was desirable to disarm the batteries at Cadsand.

Was it in your opinion advisable, under all the circumstances that you know to have existed?—On the morning of the 30th, I think it might have been attacked

with success, the enemy had not then shewn any force.

Were the batteries on the coast of Cadsand, close or open batteries?—They were open; I am not clear that there was not a pallisade in their rear, there was no intrenchment behind them.

If the island of Cadsand had been in our possession, would it have been possible for the transports to have proceeded up the Scheldt without molestation from the guns of Flushing?—I think it would.

Have you seen the printed papers containing Queries, put as it appears, by the lords commissioners of the admiralty to you and sir James Saumarez?—I have.

Do you know at what period of time those Queries were put and answered?—About April 1808.

Were those Queries put to you and sir James Saumarez by the lords commissioners of the admiralty, or by any and what other persons?—They came through persons at the admiralty, but I considered them from others of the ministers.

Do you recollect that the first Query states what proportion of this force is deemed requisite?—I think that was the fourth Query; of those that were sent there were three Queries, which it did not rest with sir James Saumarez and myself to answer.

Do you mean, that there were any more Queries put than appear in the printed papers?—There were I think three; but they did not relate, as I have said, to sir James Saumarez and myself, and they were not answered.

What do you mean by their not relating to sir James Saumarez and yourself?—As far as my recollection serves, they were questions as to the naval force disposable for the service. I therefore considered them questions for the admiralty.

You will recollect that the first Query, which appears to have been answered by you and sir James Saumarez, states what proportion of this force is deemed requisite: what force was meant by the words "this force?"—I doubt whether any list of vessels actually applicable to the service was given; as I have said the former Queries referred to it. But a certain force of line-of-battle ships was always considered necessary, a force nearly equal to what the enemy was supposed to have in the basin of Flushing.

Do you understand that the words "this force" related to any force that was described, in either of the three former

Queries?—A force that was to have been described, but that I do not think actually was, I can scarcely charge my memory at this distance of time with minute points.

You would hardly have answered a Query which requires to know whether "this force" was all that was necessary, without knowing what force was stated?—I doubt if the force was known; that refers to three other Queries. I do not think I should have recollected that, but the same paper was sent to me to know whether I remembered the answers to those Queries, that is the thing that brought it more fully to my recollection.

You will find there is another paper of Queries put to you and sir James Saumarez: have the goodness to state the date of that paper.—They were put in consequence of the answers to the first Queries, and followed them within a few days.

You have stated, that you cannot ascertain the precise number of men which the boats of lord Gardner's division might have carried; without ascertaining the precise number of men they would have carried, have you any means of knowing whether those boats would, with your own, have been able to land the 2,000 men which lord Huntley required?—They would not; I doubt whether the whole number landed by my boats and those of lord Gardner's division would have exceeded 1,000.

I understand you to have stated, that you think if the landing had been effected at Cadsand on the 30th, it would not then have been opposed by a force that would have resisted?—There was no appearance of force on the morning of the 30th.

If it had not been for the violent state of the wind on that morning, would not that landing have been effected?—I think it would; some stress was laid on lord Huntley's instructions to land 2,000 men, but still I think the landing would have been carried into effect.

How many men of war had you under your command?—There were five frigates, five sloops, I think, three or four gun vessels, and I was joined there by a bomb; the sloops were for the most part a small class of brig, which has not boats for landing troops.

Do you happen to know whether lord Gardner's squadron had flat boats?—I understood not generally; there might have been a few, but not generally.

Do you happen to know whether lord Gardner had 6 or 8 sail of the line?—I am not certain by any means, but I think 6.

In the conversation you had with lord Huntley on the 27th of July, did you understand lord Huntley had reason to expect that you would have had the means of landing two thousand men?—My lord Huntley's instructions expressed that expectation.

I think you have stated in your evidence, that it was sir Richard Strachan's intention to have gone up the Scheldt on the 2d of August; what day did the frigates and line-of-battle ships pass up the Scheldt?—The order for the frigates to pass was received on the 8th; they passed on the 11th; there had been a previous order, which was countermanded; the line-of-battle ships did not pass through until the day after the batteries were opened against Flushing, but they came to the inner part of the Duerloo on the day the frigates passed through.

Can you state to the Committee the reasons why they did not pass sooner?—From the 3th to the 11th the wind was foul, they could not go; sir Richard Strachan's intention to pass through with the line-of-battle ships I have stated was expressed to me in a letter dated the 2d.

Can you state the reason why they did not pass up between the 2d and the 8th?—I cannot.

You do not know any reason why they could not have passed up between the 2d and the 8th?—There were many days on which they could have passed, there were some days on which they could not; the intention of sir Richard Strachan's letter on the 2d was to hold the ships in readiness to push up, after the retreat of the French line-of-battle ships had been cut off by our troops at Bathz; whether the French ships having passed Bathz made any change in the plan I really do not know.

You have stated, that notwithstanding some stress was laid upon the subject of lord Huntley's instructions from the 30th, you would have landed the 2,000 men; in what numbers did you mean to disembark those men?—I think if I could have promised a rapid return of the boats, that they would have landed with the 700.

Then according to lord Huntley's instructions, you and lord Huntley would, notwithstanding those instructions, have risked that landing contrary to your sense of the instructions?—What I state is matter of opinion gathered from the terms in which the conversation was held; my lord Huntley was anxious for the performance of the service, and would, I have no doubt,

have taken upon him that discretion which every officer at a distance from his superior must do.

You have stated to the Committee, that you had in contemplation to have run transports on shore for the purpose of landing two regiments, but were prevented in consequence of the accumulated force that appeared to be collected at Cadsand; if you had thought of this measure a little sooner, might not you have put the men on shore by the same means?—There was an objection to the running the transports on shore while the enemy was in force, and the weather was unsettled; it would not have made the number actually landed greater; the intention was to let the boats return more rapidly, but on the 30th the wind was directly off the land, and it would have been difficult to get the transports there.

At what distance from the shore do you imagine the transports would have grounded?—The shore was more steep than I expected to have found it, but I really cannot say how near the transports would have gone without grounding.

Is it your opinion that if a landing had been attempted on the 30th, of 700 men, Cadsand would have been in possession of the British army?—We should have made our landing good; the enemy had a force there on the same evening.

How early in the day could the landing probably have been made good?—Between 9 and 10 in the morning.

How early in the course of the day did you observe any enemy's troops in force there?—The signal was made to me for field-pieces at noon, the troops were seen at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Is it your opinion that by noon you could have effected a landing of two divisions of 700 men?—We could.

Is it your opinion that before 4 o'clock you could have effected a landing of three divisions of 700 men?—We certainly could have had the brigade on shore that was intended; the whole brigade intended for Cadsand was, I think, 2,400 men.

Did you communicate this opinion to lord Huntley?—I told my lord Huntley that there might be a return of the boats in about an hour, but not in less than that.

Did the same objection which you stated to employing the transport boats, apply to the employing the flat boats you had with your squadron?—By no means; the flat boats were taken into the calculation of the 700 men.

Had you room on board your squadron for more flat boats than you had?—I think not; I had the transports examined, they were all of too small a size to carry flat boats.

State whether, after lord Huntley communicated to you his instructions not to attempt a landing unless he could put on shore 2,000 men at one trip, you had an opportunity of communicating that part of the instructions to Sir Richard Strachan, or in point of fact, did communicate that part of the instruction to Sir Richard Strachan?—I did not consider the instruction was not to land unless 2,000 men could be put on shore; but it did state an expectation that I could land that number; I did not know it until late in the evening of the 27th, and had no opportunity to communicate it.

What was the distance between your squadron and that of Lord Gardner on the morning of the 30th?—Lord Gardner's squadron was in sight to leeward, but that was all in the course of the forenoon; it took its station off the Duerloo.

Do you know the state of the French force as to ships of war in the basin of Flushing, at the time you speak of their numbers, force, and state of equipment?—There were no vessels in the basin; the enemy's fleet it was understood when we sailed was at Flushing, but I had learnt from a cutter on the evening of the 28th, that the ships had returned to the Scheldt; I saw three sail which I supposed to be of the line in the Scheldt, there was a frigate and some gun boats off Flushing.

In your opinion was the previous capture of Flushing necessary to the intended attack upon Antwerp?—As matter of opinion I think not, but that opinion is formed since the event; I beg further to state that in the employment I was, I could take but a very narrow view of the proceedings and intentions.

In your opinion, considering the other points of descent that were within our power, did not the debarkation upon Walcheren mischievously as well as unnecessarily retard the objects of the Expedition? [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

The Witness was again called in, and the question proposed.

To answer that question, I think I should at the time be in possession of more than I actually know; I am not at all aware of the objects of the Expedition, but from common report the view in which the

Commander in Chief saw it then must be very different from that in which he would see it now; I humbly submit this is a question I cannot answer.

The object stated in the question related to a former question, in which the main object is stated to be the destruction of the arsenals at Antwerp; was not that object mischievously and unnecessarily retarded by the debarkation at Walcheren?—If the same troops were afterwards to proceed to Antwerp, it must of course be a very great delay; in the way I then saw it Flushing seemed to be a very primary object.

Are you correctly understood to have stated, that if it had not been for the unfavourable state of the wind, the boats of the men of war, together with the boats of the transports, might have landed 1,400 men at once?—They would.

In point of fact, by the return of the men of war's boats might not the whole 2,000 men have been landed in 3 hours?—I think they would not have been landed in 3 hours, I think we should have found difficulty in getting the boats back.

That is supposing that the men of war's boats should have returned?—It would have been an hour at least before they could have returned; I think from the state of the weather, it would have been more.

In the communication made by you to lord Gardner, did you ask for the boats of lord Gardner's squadron to be sent to you, or did you ask for the junction of lord Gardner's squadron with your's?—I wrote for his lordship's co-operation; I at the same time stated that his boats were what I wanted; and I made the communication, thinking they might come when the ships could not.

What were the contents of lord Gardner's letter inclosing the extract from his instructions?—It was a letter of form, merely inclosing the instruction, and acknowledging the receipt of mine.

Is the Committee to understand, that that extract from the instructions implied an order to lord Gardner not to detach his boats from his squadron?—The order was for lord Gardner to keep the situation he then held, and that perhaps it might not be necessary at that time for the troops to be landed at Cadsand.

Was that in the instruction, or was that only the inference drawn from the instruction?—It was in the instruction.

Have you got that original extract, or

have you a copy of that extract with you?—It is in town; I have no copy with me.

How far were the ships you commanded from the intended place of landing?—The first station I took was from two to three miles from the place; it was intended to move the ships, and to go within half a mile of the beach.

Was the state of the wind on the morning of the 30th of July, such as to enable the boats of the men of war and the flat boats to effect a landing?—It was; they would have been some time in rowing in.

You have stated, that at noon on the 30th of July, a signal was made for field-pieces coming down to the shore; would it, in your opinion, have been prudent to have landed seven hundred men, stating as you do the difficulty of getting the boats off to land seven hundred others?—At that time the idea of landing had been abandoned for the day.

Are the instructions you referred to as your first instructions, those which bear date the 21st of July 1809, dated from the *Amethyst* in the Downs?—They are.

Have you with you, or can you produce one of the papers stated to be inclosed in those instructions, intituled, “Army Arrangements?”—I am not quite certain that I can, for I left my ship in so much hurry that I do not know whether all my papers came with me or not.

You have stated, that if the English fleet had passed Flushing they might have proceeded to Antwerp; state to the Committee whether you think they could have passed Lillo before they had got to Antwerp, without the capture of Lillo?—I have not stated that they could have gone to Antwerp.

You have stated that on the morning of the 30th of July you could have landed in the boats of the men of war under your command, about 700 British troops; at that time had you any reason to know what the strength of the enemy in Cadsand was?—I have stated that we saw no force at that time. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

Brigadier General MONTRESOR was called in.—Examined by the Committee.—

Were you not a general officer under the command of the marquis of Huntley in the late Expedition?—I was.

Did lord Huntley communicate to you his instructions?—He did.

What were those instructions relative

to the landing in Cadsand?—That the landing in Cadsand was intrusted to me with 2,000 men, to be under my command.

Was that the total number that was intended to be landed in Cadsand?—Unless a further number was necessary.

Were you given to understand that preparations were made for the landing the whole of that number at once?—The marquis of Huntley informed me that 2,000 men were to be landed at one period.

Do you know whether that statement was included in lord Huntley’s instructions?—It was not in the written instructions that the 2,000 were to be debarked at one and the same period.

Do you know by what means it was communicated to lord Huntley that he was to expect 2,000 men could be disembarked at one period?—Lord Huntley informed me that he got that instruction from general Brownrigg, the quarter master general.

State for what reason the debarkation was not effected on the 30th of July?—The wind was unfavourable till the 31st, it setting on the shore.

Were your instructions not to attempt a landing unless 2,000 men could have been landed at once?—There was no instruction to that effect.

Had you any verbal orders to that effect from lord Huntley?—I should have received an order to land from the officer commanding the division, lord Huntley; I being immediately in the squadron with lord Huntley, was immediately under his direct command.

Did not you understand that on the 30th, notwithstanding the weather, 700 men could have been landed at one period?—I understood from commodore Owen, that from 6 to 700 at the utmost could be landed from the King’s ships boats.

Did not you understand the whole number could have been landed before 4 o’clock on that day by means of those boats?—I did not; it might have been communicated to the marquis of Huntley, but it never came to me.

Had you any means of knowing what was the force of the enemy upon the coast of Cadsand on the morning of the 30th?—We had no information from Cadsand, but the *Nymphen* frigate telegraphed 2,000 men, at 2 o’clock on the afternoon of the 31st; there were 400 men seen from a frigate in shore on the 30th.

From the appearance of the enemy's force on the morning of the 30th, do you think that it would not have been safe to have landed the force in detachments of from 6 to 700 men?—Certainly not.

\* And it was from that consideration that the force was not landed on the 30th?—There was another consideration, the want of gun-boats with the squadron to cover the landing.

Could not the landing have been effectually covered by the ships of war?—I do not imagine it could; the coast being so shoal, ships of war could not approach sufficiently.

At what period did the division under the command of lord Huntley receive orders not to make any further attempt upon Cadsand?—On the 3d of August.

Were any reasons assigned for the change of the destination of that corps?—A letter, I understood, was received by commodore Owen, that the division under the marquis of Huntley was to go to the Roompot, to reinforce the force in Walcheren.

Could not the landing have been attempted without risk, with the boats that attended that squadron, at some time between the 30th of July and the 3d of August?—I conceive not.

For what reason?—The weather principally, and the few boats that could land only from 6 to 700 men in the face of a greater force.

You have said, that on the morning of the 30th it would not have been safe to have landed men by divisions of from 6 to 700 each, what rendered it unsafe?—To land in face of a superior force which was protected by batteries on the coast.

On the morning of the 30th had any superior force of the enemy been seen from the ships which contained the troops?—I did not hear that in one body a superior force appeared; but there appeared a variety of troops marching in to relieve Flushing, which was the great communication from the continent.

Were those troops discerned from the ships which contained your troops on the morning of the 30th?—Discerned from the ships of war, many of which had troops.

They were discerned on the morning of the 30th?—Yes, there were 400 discerned in the course of the 30th from the ships of war; I cannot pretend to say at what hour it was they were discerned; as far as my recollection assists me it was about mid-day.

Were there only 400 then discerned?—Only 400 in one body, but a variety of other detachments and picquets appeared all along the coast.

At the same time?—Yes, the coast was guarded.

Was there any information from the commander in chief to lord Huntley, of the force he might expect the enemy to have in Cadsand at the time you would have to attempt a landing?—None, that I know of.

At what time in the morning of the 30th did you see commodore Owen?—I cannot positively recollect my having seen him.

Did you see him at all in the course of that day?—I did see him on that day, as I find from my papers.

At what time?—I cannot recollect, in the morning.

Was it before noon?—It was.

At what time in the morning of the same day did you see lord Huntley?—At the same time, he being on board with commodore Owen.

Did any conversation pass in your presence between lord Huntley and commodore Owen, relating to the landing of the troops?—I was informed by the marquis of Huntley that no greater force than from 6 to 700 at the utmost could be put on shore at once; I remember perfectly that the commodore said that 700 was the greatest force he could put on shore in the king's boats.

When this passed, did you understand that the intention of effecting a debarkation on that day was absolutely given up, or was it under deliberation?—I must have conceived it to be under deliberation, as the signal was made for two days provisions being cooked before.

Did commodore Owen state in your presence, that he thought the men of war could cover the landing of the troops?—Certainly not.

Did the batteries on the shore appear to be manned on the morning of the 30th? They did, and picquets were seen to shew themselves when the flat-boats were drawn up near the vessels.

At what time of the day was that?—Early in the morning.

Was any body of troops amounting to 400, seen together before two o'clock on that day?—They were seen in a variety of detachments passing towards Bruskens in order to embark for Flushing.

With the information you have subse-



quently received, do you now think that a landing might safely have been effected on that day?—I do not.

From what you observed of the force of the enemy which appeared in Cadsand on the 30th and the 31st, and the subsequent days, are you of opinion that if a landing of 2,000 men could have been effected on the morning of the 30th, such a corps would have been enabled to maintain its position on Cadsand against the enemy?—I do not think they could.

If a landing of 2,000 men could have been effected in one trip on the morning of the 30th of July, do you think it would have been proper to have attempted it?—I think it might have been proper to carry a particular object.

Are you acquainted with the means of communication between the island of Cadsand and Flanders?—As far as the charts and maps will acquaint me.

State what you know from the charts and maps you have seen—Cadsand is an island, but I conceive the communication may be very readily made from the greater part of the continent, by means of boats, which are very numerous.

What is the breadth of the channel which separates Cadsand from Flanders?—At low water it is narrow, though at high water broad at Sluys, which is the regular communication.

Can you state, not accurately but nearly, the breadth at high or low water?—As far as my glass would assist me where I was anchored, it appeared to be 150 yards over at high water, though not 30 (I may have been deceived,) at low water.

Do you mean to say that the breadth is uniform, or that it varies in different places?—It certainly varies by the map; as far as I could see, is what I have mentioned in the Sluys gate.

Opposite to what part of the island of Cadsand do you imagine the narrowest part of that channel to be?—It appears by the map on the south side of the island, but the maps are very inaccurate.

Have you any reason to believe that the French had thrown a bridge over it?—We were unacquainted with any such circumstance.

Could we have prevented the communication, if we had been in possession of the island?—I conceive not with 2,000 men.

What was the whole amount of force lord Huntley could have landed, if necessary?—About 5,000 men.

At what distance was the squadron from the shore on the 30th of July?—It varied; but it might have been two miles.

When did the squadron change its position?—It came nearer on the 30th; it moved again on the 2d, as it was then the intention to pass between Bruskens and Flushing.

What passed with respect to landing the troops on the 31st of July, and the 1st and 2d of August?—On the 31st of July, a signal was made for landing, and my signal was made to repair on board lord Huntley's ship; at that time the Clyde was under way. Lord Huntley informed me that he intended to attempt a landing, and wished to know my opinion, asking my opinion: my answer was, I concluded it was in obedience to orders he had received. He referred me to a letter to commodore Owen, and shewed me one from general Brownrigg, in which they desired he would wait for a reinforcement of boats; but lord Huntley informed me that his zeal for taking some active part had induced him to make the attempt; but on my representation of these two letters received from general Brownrigg, and sir Richard Strachan, it was declined, and commodore Owen then told me he had also received a signal from lord Gardner, to cease hostilities in the south-east, as far as I recollect the point of the compass in which we lay from him; but I further requested lord Huntley would not take my opinion upon the measure, but refer it to general Dyott who was second in command of the brigade, as I felt a delicacy in giving that opinion as I was principally concerned in the debarkation: the debarkation in consequence was relinquished, and the commodore informed me the next day that it was a fortunate circumstance that it was so, as he could not have put one man on shore after the first debarkation took place, on account of the weather; and at two o'clock on that day the *Nymphen*, in shore, telegraphed 2,000 in one body with bright arms. It was mentioned, that they had bright arms in order to shew they were regular troops. On the 1st of course we waited for the orders, as expressed in the letters of the 2d. I understood that the commodore received a letter from sir Richard Strachan, expressive of his approbation that nothing had been attempted on Cadsand, and that it was his intention to join him on the 3d, and to lead the squadron between Flushing and Cadsand.

Was general Dyott on board?—General Dyott was on board another frigate.

You did not see general Dyott?—No.

Was the representation you made to lord Huntley as to the two letters received in writing?—No.

State the substance of that representation.—I thought it precarious to undertake it, and in disobedience to the two letters received from sir Richard Strachan and general Brownrigg.

Do you recollect the dates of those letters?—No, I do not.

At what period after the appearance of the squadron on the coast, did the batteries appear to be manned?—There were always some troops in the batteries; but on any demonstration of landing, strong piquets appeared from behind the barracks.

Did you hear of any proposal to run the transports on shore with troops?—I did on the 31st.

Do you know why that plan was laid aside?—Upon the debarkation being stopped.

What was the utmost amount of the enemy's force which appeared, in your opinion, on the Cadsand side?—The information I received was from the navy; few were to be perceived except when any demonstration of landing was made, as we could not see into the anterior over the dyke.

Do you recollect what the amount was in the opinion of the navy?—They were seen in a variety of corps, and a variety of dresses distinguishing several corps, all marching towards Bruskens.

Do you happen to know where the commander in chief was on the 31st of July?—I do not; as the squadron I was in was in the Weilin Channel, and we were distant nine or ten miles.

You do not know whether he was sufficiently near to be a witness of the debarkation of the troops in Cadsand?—Certainly not.

How far do you consider it to be from the intended place of landing to Sluys, which you have mentioned to be a convenient point for the French to pass from Flanders to Cadsand?—By the map it appears about two miles and a half.

Supposing that by any extraordinary exertions it had been possible to have got 2,000 men at shore on Cadsand early in the day on the 30th, from what you know of the subsequent state of the weather, do you conceive it would have been possible

to have landed so many more men as to have enabled those 2,000 to maintain their position?—I do not think it was possible, as the weather was so bad; we lost two boats a-stern of the ship.

What then do you think would have been the consequence with respect to those 2,000?—From the force that the enemy were pouring into Cadsand I have no doubt the 2,000 must have fallen.

Have you formed any opinion as to the importance of taking possession of Cadsand?—I have.

What was that opinion?—I did not think it was a necessary point to have taken in order to navigate the mouth of the Scheldt; and it was proved afterwards a squadron passed the mouth of the Scheldt, without either Flushing falling or Cadsand.

Have you the smallest doubt in your mind, that the attempt would have been most rash and unadvisable under all the circumstances to have landed his majesty's troops in detachments of 700 men on the morning of the 30th?—I conceive it would have been ill advised.

I understand you to have said that you have seen lord Huntley's instructions, and that the order not to land with a smaller force than 2,000 was not a written order, but you believed it to be a verbal order?—In lord Huntley's instructions that 2,000 men were to be landed was expressed in a written order; but he was given to understand that 2,000 men were to be landed at one time, which was not expressed in that written order.

Is the Committee to understand from you that the order for lord Huntley not to land less than 2,000 men at one debarkation, was a verbal order and not a written order?—It was a verbal order only.

How do you know that?—From lord Huntley.

Did lord Huntley communicate to you when he received that verbal order?—It was immediately previous to lord Huntley's embarking.

When did lord Huntley embark?—I think on the 27th of July, in the evening.

Where did lord Huntley receive the verbal communication not to land less than 2,000 men?—I conclude at Ramsgate.

Did he receive that order at Ramsgate from general Brownrigg?—As he informed me.

Do you know when general Brownrigg

quitted Ramsgate to go to Deal?—I do not.

Do you know when the head quarters of the army were removed from Ramsgate to Deal?—A day or two before we sailed.

Do you mean a day or two before the 28th?—Before the 28th.

Do you think it was as far back as the 25th?—I cannot pretend to say.

Is it not customary, when the head quarters of an army move, that the quarter master general moves with it?—It is.

Did lord Huntley express to you, in conversation, any disappointment in finding there were not boats to enable him to carry into execution that which he had understood from general Brownrigg he was to carry into effect, namely, the landing 2,000 men at one time?—No man could express greater disappointment.

What passed in that conversation? [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

The Witness was again called in, and the question was proposed.

He expressed great surprize that the boats were not in number sufficient to land the 2,000 men as he expected. The commodore said, he could not depend upon the transport boats, as they could not row on shore if the weather was rough; there was nothing further that I recollect that was material.

Was that the only conversation in which you heard lord Huntley express any surprize and disappointment at finding there were not a sufficient number of boats provided to land 2,000 men at one trip?—He repeated his surprize afterwards, the following day when I saw him, that the squadron had not been furnished with that number of boats.

Do not you know, that transport boats are usually employed in the debarkation of troops?—They are generally; but this being an open roadsted, the landing troops in transport boats made it more precarious. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

CHARLES WILLIAM PAISLEY, esq., Captain in the Royal Engineers, was called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Were you chief engineer in lord Huntley's division?—I was.

Were you employed to reconnoitre the defenses of Cadsand?—I was employed to reconnoitre upon the practicability of a landing in Cadsand.

What was your report upon that subject?—I can state the substance of it, but I have not a copy of the report about me; but it was delivered to colonel Fyers, who was commanding engineer upon the Expedition.

To whom did you make this report?—I delivered it to colonel Fyers on the morning of the 15th of July, and went with colonel Fyers to lord Chatham on that morning.

Were you on board commodore Owen's ship at the time lord Huntley arrived off Cadsand?—I went on board the Thalia frigate by order of marquis Huntley, in order to communicate with general Montresor, whose brigade was to land; I went occasionally on board the head quarters ship, but I was not embarked on board the head quarters ship.

Do you remember on what day you arrived off the coast of Cadsand with the Expedition?—On the 29th of July at 12 o'clock, we anchored abreast of Blankenburgh, which is at a short distance from Cadsand.

On the morning of the 30th, had you an opportunity of observing what was the state of the batteries or of the enemy's force in Cadsand?—On the 30th I went on board the head quarters ship, and waited on the marquis of Huntley; I had an opportunity of observing the state of the batteries, but not of the enemy's force; the state of the batteries nearly confirmed what I had seen of the state of the coast before, when I went to reconnoitre it, but I had an opportunity of observing some few guns the second time, which I did not observe the first time I was sent there.

From the observations you made on the 30th, did you think it would have been practicable or prudent to have attacked those batteries by landing detachments of not more than 700 men at a time?—The batteries appeared to me to have very little strength in themselves, but the propriety of attacking them with 700 men would depend entirely upon the enemy's force, which I cannot vouch for; I do not know what force the enemy had there; the batteries appeared to me to be open batteries.

Do you know the reason why the debarkation did not take place?—I know the orders that were given with regard to the debarkation, but I cannot say that I know the reason why those orders were not executed.

What were the orders that were given?—The day of the 30th was principally spent in making arrangements for the landing; orders were given that the 9th regiment was to land in boats, and orders came that night (I do not recollect at what hour of the night, but on the night of the 30th) that the transports containing the two other battalions of general Montresor's brigade, which were the 38th and 42d, were to run on shore while the 9th landed in boats; on the morning of the 31st the soldiers were ready to step into the boats with two days provisions cooked according to orders given, and the ships stood in closer to the coast on the morning of the 31st; afterwards those orders were countermanded, but I do not know the reason why.

Is it your opinion, that the ships of war could have approached near enough to the coast to have covered the debarkation of that detachment on the 30th or 31st?—I should think the naval officers are the best judges of that question; but it appears to me there was no difficulty in landing, unless what might arise from the enemy having a greater force than we could oppose to them in the first instance; of the enemy's force I am not a judge.

Was that detachment provided with the intrenching tools which might have been wanted for that service?—The marquis of Huntley did not communicate to me his intentions, or the nature of the operations that were likely to be executed by the division; but we had intrenching tools enough to make batteries, to take any small post.

Did you, at any time on the 30th or 31st, state to the marquis of Huntley, that there was a deficiency in the intrenching tools, if any field-works were to be raised?—There were two small ordnance-vessels fitted out with intrenching tools, one for the marquis of Huntley's division, the other for sir John Hope's; the arrival of those vessels was reported to me on the 30th, when we were lying off Cadsand; I had the day before officially reported to the marquis of Huntley, that in consequence of the want of intrenching tools, the engineer's department was entirely inefficient, but this difficulty was obviated by the arrival of the vessels I have mentioned on the 30th.

Do you know of any report made to the marquis of Huntley upon the day intended for his landing, that the enemy were very strong in Cadsand?—The Nymphen

frigate was lying in-shore; she made signals, with regard to the enemy's force, by telegraph, which signal was read by every frigate, consequently I heard the purport of the intelligence communicated by captain Maxwell in that way.

What intelligence did that frigate convey by telegraphic signal?—It was I think on the 30th, but I am not positive, that he telegraphed that there were 1,500 men seen on shore, at another time that there were some field-pieces seen on shore.

What distance of time was there between those two communications?—The 1,500 men were telegraphed on the 30th, and the field pieces on the 31st; but he was making constant signals, I did not attend to them in general.

Do you know that the marquis of Huntley himself reconnoitred that force reported by the frigate, or sent any officer of his staff to reconnoitre it?—I do not know that he did, I was not on board the head quarters ship.

At what hour on the 30th did those two vessels with the intrenching tools on board report themselves to you?—I do not remember the hour, it was in the morning.

Do you recollect the hour at which the 1,500 men were telegraphed?—No, I do not; I think it was in the afternoon, but I cannot say.

Can you say whether it was before or after the arrival of the two vessels with the intrenching tools?—It was after the arrival of the vessels with the intrenching tools; I believe that the vessels with the intrenching tools came in the convoy with us, but I did not perceive them in so large a convoy, and nobody else knew any thing about them.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.—The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 6.

*Lune, 12<sup>e</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Rt. Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

Captain Sir HOME POPHAM, a Member of the House, attending in his place, was examined.

Have you brought with you the memoranda you referred to on your former examination?—I have.

Have the goodness to produce them.

(P)

[Sir Home Popham delivered in the Memoranda referred to; which were read.]

“MEMORANDA.

“As I have already shewn to lord Mulgrave the detailed plan of attack on the island of Walcheren, which his Majesty’s government directed me to prepare in 1798, and which I afterwards shewed to Mr. Sullivan in 1803, when he sent to me to meet Pichegru, Dumourier, Tinsot, and Sontag, it will only now be necessary for me to make such alterations as circumstances, and the nature of the force to be employed will naturally suggest, which cannot, in any manner, interfere with the basis or principle on which the first proposition was founded.—These alterations will be made on the original paper, that they may be distinguished in the scale of arrangement which is there proposed.—The present enterprize, however, as explained to me, has greater objects in view than the possession of Walcheren and the destruction of the naval depôts on that island; for it must be considered as combining the destruction of the Antwerp fleet, and its arsenals, with those of the island above-mentioned; but it will be essential to the second operation that the first should be secured in such a manner as to secure the safety of the fleet on its return.—In an object of such magnitude there must be a variety of opinions on the mode of attack, and it will be assuming too much to imagine, that any individual of one profession is competent to shape the arrangements in such a manner as to leave no room for observation or improvement; but if any of the ideas which I venture to submit, founded on the best recollection of the local knowledge which I possessed in 1793, should promise any advantage to the Commanders in Chief, I shall feel myself particularly gratified.—In the Memorandum\* I gave sir Richard Bickerton, on the best mode which occurred to me of attacking the enemy’s fleet when it lay at Terneuse, I proposed that there should be three distinct squadrons, which were to act independent, though as to the main object co-operating with each other.—The same rules nearly must be followed up in the present enterprize; but there must be four principal

squadrons, having each a particular object, and from which the minor details of that object will naturally branch out. The squadrons will be, The squadron for Walcheren. The squadron for Pilotage, The squadron to attack the enemy’s flotilla, and The advanced squadron for Antwerp.—I understand that 35,000 effective men are ready for this service, and thirty sail of the line, 20 frigates, 35 sloops, and 30 gunbrigs, besides gun-boats, mortar vessels, fire-ships, &c. &c.—This is a force of such magnitude, and the point of operation at so short a distance from England, that it is absolutely necessary every arrangement should be made before a single man is embarked; and the commanding officers of the several brigades and divisions should be so perfectly acquainted with the duty assigned to them, as to make them feel satisfied of success.—The paper No. I. is the detail for Walcheren; No. II. the detail for Pilotage; No. III. the English flotilla; and No. IV. the detail for Antwerp.—Before I close this paper, I must assume, that twenty thousand men will be sufficient for the reduction of Walcheren and Beveland; indeed I hope that little resistance will be made, when the nature and extent of the force is known to the enemy. It will be of great importance to have ten thousand effective men embarked separate, and kept as a reserve, but ready to proceed up the Scheldt as soon as the commander-in-chief sees a moral certainty of succeeding in his attack of the island of Walcheren; because that detachment will be equal to the first object of surprize, and will be supported by the disposable men, after securing Walcheren and Beveland.—I will proceed to the minute details of every department as soon as I am informed that the measure is decided upon, and acquainted with whom I may communicate confidentially.—Although I have dwelt so much upon this subject, I think, that its point of consequence to the general cause, it will not be of such importance as another operation which may succeed this, if successful; and with manifold advantages consequently resulting from that success, I mean the Weser; if the progress of Schill’s partisans continues to improve as much as it has done in the last two months. But on this subject there will be sufficient time for me to offer such observations as have occurred to me.”

No. I.

“As I have already observed, it will

\* This Memorandum was written for sir Richard, in consequence of his asking me a question on the subject of Terneuse, in August 1808.

not be necessary very materially to alter the principle of my original proposition for the attack of Walcheren, unless we are informed that any material alterations have taken place on the island since it was proposed; the only variation of consequence which ever occurred to me was, to make the eastern attack one of more consequence, that it may embrace most of the points calculated on to branch out from the western one, making that more of a divisional column of demonstration than one of direct attack. By this means, and only looking to the possession of Walcheren, the force would be more concentrated. But when our views are to extend beyond this point, then, I think, additional reasons will occur for adopting my amended opinion, independent of the force that will be required for North Beveland.—It must remain for the opinion of the general, and it may be a matter worthy of extreme consideration, how far he thinks it will be expedient to extend his line of insular operations; I mean whether North Beveland is, or is not, a point of consequence to the great and extended scale to which the present Expedition is proposed to be carried. In my humble opinion, the possession of North Beveland will not be attended with much increased difficulty or labour, and it may be of some consequence to ascertain by the possession of it, how it may be made useful to the purpose of a permanent defence of the island of Walcheren, by increasing the difficulty which the enemy would have in making any attack upon it, by sinking vessels in the channels, overflowing any part of the island, or inundating altogether the small island of Wolversdyke, which would present the strongest possible line of defence to that quarter of attack. Few people will I believe doubt the tenability of the island while the navigation is open, provided government wishes to retain it; but many probably will question it in a severe winter. I do not however doubt it under the impression I have at present. Let me hear the obstacles on the spot, and then if I cannot devise convincing expedients to remove them, I will immediately relinquish the opinion I have at present on that subject.—The island of South Beveland we must possess for a short time, lengthened however in proportion to the increased difficulties which we can raise to check the progress of the enemy on that side.—The island of Cadsand is another consideration.

Part of that may I believe be overflowed; and although it is a spot where the enemy may collect a large force, yet it cannot collect vessels in any number on the North side with safety, but must have recourse to the channel of Sluys, or the creeks on the east side, which will naturally increase its length of navigation, and cannot be well done without our knowledge.—In the original proposition, the army was divided into three main columns, the east, west, and south or centre. Now I propose that the western should be materially reduced, and the eastern increased; in short, the attack on Campveere to be principally from the eastward. When the three points of Campveere, Flushing, and Armuyden, are in possession, I believe the island may be considered to be ours, for the resistance which Middleburg can then possibly make, will amount to nothing; indeed Flushing is the main object, and into this place I hope a detached column of observation will be able to drive all the military force of the island.—In the new disposition, 8,000 troops will be requisite for the eastern division, 8,000 the centre, and 2,000 to march from Zoutland for the purpose before mentioned, when it is ascertained that the force of the island will not admit of any detachment superior to this column; and 2,000 to land as early as possible on Beveland, to prevent the troops going up the Slough being at all annoyed by any heavy guns which may be brought down for that purpose; not that I have the least apprehension of such a thing, but it will be well to be prepared, and these troops will be ready to make their progress afterwards to the essential positions of the island, and the subsequent arrangement which may be made by the general in that quarter.—On the first view of this subject, it may appear strange that the force proposed for the present attack, should be so far greater than that under which the original proposition was made in 1798.—In 1798 there were very few troops on the island, I believe only 200 French, and the enemy did not appear at that moment to attach so much importance to it as they have since done; it will therefore be right to calculate on the island being put into a better state of defence against surprise, that the fortifications have been repaired, that field-pieces may have been placed in different parts of the sand-hills and on the dykes, with temporary breast-works, palisades and traverses. Under

this supposition, the number of field-pieces for landing will of course be increased, with all the implements ready for throwing up works, sand bags in abundance, and sailors to draw the guns, with a variety of other arrangements which will be hereafter mentioned, independent of the general details in the original plan. But when an accurate information has been obtained, and it appears that any strong works have been erected in Zoutland Bay, it may then become a question, whether a new disposition for landing should not be made. But I do not think that the principle of 16,000 men for the investiture of the island can be altered, and 2,000 or more to skirt the whole island, which I suppose will be done in 24 hours, by doing it in different directions, where an open communication can be obtained to form a junction; for as soon as the troops are all locked up in Flushing, then such detachments as can be spared according to the force in Flushing, may be immediately sent forward to join the Antwerp division, and that may be done from Beveland, relieving the posts in succession from Walcheren, by which means the 2 or 3,000 men on Beveland might be at Santfliet as soon as the main body; and the whole of this can be done by telegraph; the same communications may be made by the pilotage squadron, so that every movement may be communicated between the extreme parts of the army in five minutes.—The bombarding squadron will in course be increased, and will be noticed in the paper speaking of the Flotilla.—The season presents great advantages to the invading army, by giving great facilities of communication from the superior state of the roads.—I may presume 10 sail of the line will be left in an effective state; but the lower-deck guns except four, with the carronades, and the foremast and aftermast guns on the main deck, should all be taken out from the other ships; they should be disencumbered of stores as much as possible, keeping nothing on board but those articles which are absolutely necessary for a short voyage.—It so seldom happens that regiments are of the same strength, or indeed ships of precisely the same capacity for receiving men, that it will be difficult to form a precise scheme of embarkation till the returns are obtained, and the names of the ships given in. When the line-of-battle ships have their guns taken out, and their complements consequently reduced, it will enable the

admiralty to prepare more of them. On an average, a calculation may be made, that a line-of-battle ship with a frigate and a sloop, or two sloops, will embark a regiment, with a proportionate artillery, I mean field pieces belonging to it, or to the number of regiments which will compose a brigade.—For instance: if four regiments, with their artillerymen and any dismounted cavalry which may be attached to them, should amount to from 3,200 to 3,500 men, it will require four line-of-battle ships with four frigates and four sloops (altering this minor detail according to strength or capacity) to embark the brigade. The commanding officer of the division of ships on board of which this brigade is embarked, will be accountable for preserving system, order, and regularity in the embarkation and disembarkation of the brigades, and will be furnished with all the means necessary to accomplish this point. It must be evident to every officer in the army, of how much importance it is to attend to a point so essential, and I may say so indispensable to the success and credit of an Expedition. These combinations were particularly attended to at Copenhagen: and when I first submitted the idea of brigades and divisions to the commanders in chief, they saw the advantages likely to be derived from it, and were convinced, that any number of men, from a subaltern's guard up to the strength of the whole army, might have been embarked or disembarked, or moved to any particular spot, according to the local arrangements, with the least possible delay. The minute details of this system will be explained in due time. The practical advantages of it at Copenhagen did, I believe, strike every person; and I am not aware that any accident whatever, even of the most trifling nature, happened to a man or a horse during the whole of the service. To the commanders in chief and all the generals I appeal, for their confirmation of this short statement, which I trust will not be considered an uninteresting digression at a moment when an Expedition is about to be undertaken, which, if successful in its various parts, will astonish all Europe."

#### No. II.

"I consider the squadron for pilotage to be a most essential and important part of this Expedition, and it ought to be entrusted to some officer who has studied that particular part of his profession. Be-

yond Flushing, we have only the chart lately published in France to depend upon. Certainly we may expect to get some pilots at Flushing; but how much more confident will every officer feel, when he finds the channel well buoyed off, and every arrangement made to facilitate his going up and down the river.—I think this squadron should consist of 1 frigate, 4 sloops, 6 cutters, and about 12 of the large Deal boats. From 60 to 80 buoys will be wanted, sloops buoys and frigates buoys, one half painted black the other red; small anchors for each, with hawsers, leads and lines, and every thing else necessary to enable the officers to proceed upon this very necessary service, whenever the arrangement is made, and the proportion to be buoyed off is assigned to each.—The buoys should be in the best state of repair, thoroughly examined, and fit for immediate service.—To this squadron the navy board lighters, with anchors, cables, hawsers, and towlines, should be attached, in case any ship should unfortunately get aground.”

## No. III.

“As the enemy has collected a very large flotilla from Boulogne and other places, for the purpose of establishing a formidable advanced barrier, to its fleet in the Scheldt; I submit, with all deference, whether a British flotilla should not be specifically appointed for the express purpose of checking its operations against any part of the invading force, and forming the groundwork of an attack upon the enemy, strengthened in such a manner as the commander in chief may think proper on the spot, with a view to the position of the enemy and its force. This arrangement, as well as the groundwork of all others, should be made previous to sailing, that no time may be lost, and that every person may be better enabled to understand and perform the duty assigned to him.—The squadron for bombarding, as in the original plan, as well as that for connoading the town, according to the principle laid down in the original plan, will also be selected; but it may be right to divide the bombs. And as I now think the main attack should be from the Slough, there will not probably be so much occasion for the effective fleet to be detained from its progress up the Scheldt, to attack the line-of-battle ships, wherever, they may be: however, this must remain for the decision of sir Richard Strachan, when the project is in a more advanced state of maturity.”

## No. IV.

“Several modes for the attack of Antwerp have, I understand, been suggested, though probably not altogether amounting to a digested proposition. The one, to land at Ostend and march across the country; the other to disembark in the Slough, and march across the island of South Beveland, embark again at Bathz, and land at Santfliet.—The first idea being beyond my comprehension, I cannot venture to offer an opinion upon it; and as to the latter, I think that much time will be lost, many unnecessary difficulties encountered, and that the troops will neither be so fresh or so strong by the subtraction of contingencies in a long forced march as they will by proceeding directly up the Scheldt, provided we met with no obstacles, and landing at Santfliet, which I think at present appears to be the principal point for debarkation. The number of positions on both sides of the river must depend upon the importance of their situation in the mind of the commander in chief, subject to alteration from the more recent intelligence which may be received on the spot.—Fort Lillo is a very desirable post to be in possession of, and I am sorry that I cannot obtain any correct information of its strength. I know that in 1798, when the Brabanters were in a state of insurrection, the intelligence which was received, did not make any impression that there would be a difficulty in obtaining it. The Tête de Flandre, on the opposite side, is also I conceive a most essential position, rising in importance in proportion as difficulties in getting possession of Antwerp increase. I had the honour of embarking the English artillery here in the night, previous to our evacuating Antwerp; the retreat was commanded by general Vyse, who ought to be acquainted with all the advantages of its situation; it is the great ferry from Ghent to Antwerp, and I think there is a position on the high road, which was considered as tenable for a short time even in the situation in which we were then placed, closely followed by Pichegru's army. At all events a mortar and heavy battery may be erected to destroy the ships and arsenal, if we cannot get possession of them; and a few successful rockets from Mr. Congreve, may induce the inhabitants to press the surrender of the ships (if they get so high as Antwerp, of which I have my doubts) in preference to the alternative of having that



valuable town destroyed.—I must observe here, that on the north side of the point a few gun-vessels may lie, which would flank the high road, I believe nearly two miles from the pitch of the point, and they would be out of reach of the citadel; and I do not recollect any work at the lower end of the town, at least there was none that struck me as of importance, when I was in the habit of going six or eight times a day to the quays. It must be recollected that the town is a very long town, and I believe the citadel to be a mile and a half from the lower part of it near the water side. I need not at present offer any further remark about the Tête de Flandre, but proceed to the principal landing-place, Santfliet.—I believe it is generally supposed there never was a period in which the Low Countries were left with so few troops; but the same precautions must be taken as if a considerable resistance was expected to this enterprize.—The principal and most approximate towns from which Antwerp can derive assistance should be considered. On the part of Holland, they may expect all the disposable force from Bergen-op-Zoom, Klindert, Williamstadt and Breda, though there may be some doubt as to Bergen-op-Zoom while so large a force is lying at Bathz, from whence I disembarked several regiments for Bergen-op-Zoom last war. The high road of Bergen-op-Zoom is not above four miles from Lillo, and the high roads from all the other places meet at about four miles further, on the road to Antwerp.—The roads from Lico, Malines, Louvaine and Brussels, come in on the south side of the town; these roads are all paved, and the two last places are about forty miles from Antwerp. The expediency of a close investiture of this side of the town, must in course be left with the General Officer; it may seem to promise some advantage by preventing reinforcements to the citadel, though in respect to the absolute necessity of the citadel, that will, I take it for granted, be supplied by the marines of the enemy's fleet at the last moment of their quitting it.—I have here only mentioned the principal points for consideration, the details of service for which can be hereafter enlarged upon; but I am very much inclined to think, on every reflection that I can give on this subject, that 5,000 men beyond the 30,000, should be embarked, for the purpose of attending to all the operations which are

now proposed to take place at the Tête de Flandre. I cannot at present see any reason to alter my opinion of the great importance of this plan. In many points of view, it may however appear unnecessary to fix decidedly on the Tête de Flandre, as the fleet may be taken and destroyed before it can possibly get to Antwerp. To this I answer, that it is right to be prepared in the first instance against all contingencies; if it is an object to destroy the arsenals, the Tête de Flandre is equally important.—I again repeat, that I avoid entering much into detail, for fear of making these memoirs on the subject of the Expedition carry the appearance of being too long and too tedious to enter upon.—It is impossible that the equipment of a large armament can be kept a secret beyond a certain time, from the various departments which must necessarily be concerned in it; but the object and destination of an Expedition may be masked long enough to answer almost every purpose intended from secrecy.—To the present all the appearance of a foreign equipment must be given; a greater number of ships should be fitted at Portsmouth, and their semblance of equipment should have a foreign indication, which may easily be done by issuing two or three ostensible orders, and before they are made public the troops will be ready to embark and sail.—The other two places appropriate for the embarkation are, the district of the Downs and that of the Nore; and a westerly wind is a fair wind from all these places to the place of destination, and the junction may be formed with the greatest facility on any given point: if however any troops intended for this enterprize should be in the Eastern district, they may be embarked at Harwich and sent to the Nore.—The divisions of the army for Walcheren, ought to be embarked at Portsmouth, where transports to complete the embarkation of that force beyond what the men of war can carry, should be immediately sent. The heavy artillery specially appointed for that service should be the first embarked, and sent under the charge of an agent, with instructions to proceed to Portsmouth and announce his arrival to sir Roger Curtis, who will appoint a convoy to proceed to Lisbon. His progress to the westward would be watched, and he never need get further than Dungeness.—The troops for Antwerp should be embarked as much as possible in men of

war the lightest draught of water, and the ten effective line-of-battle ships may each carry from 2 to 300 men without much inconvenience, as they may be disembarked immediately on Beveland. The remainder of the troops which embark in transports should be put in divisions of the strength of the brigades; and there should be two agents to each division. The regiments of cavalry, with the artillery horses that it is absolutely necessary to take, should embark in the most convenient situation in the Eastern district for the march of the cavalry from their present cantonments. The artillery horses will probably embark at Woolwich; those, however, necessary to draw the field brigades attached to the brigades of infantry embarked at Portsmouth, should be sent there for that purpose, but on the most reduced scale; for it must be pressed, how difficult an embarkation is that of horses, and that all our necessities for draught may be supplied on Beveland.—The officers who are to command the flotilla not in commission, should be immediately selected, and they should examine the state of it; for if this is not done, it may be sent across in a defective state, which will only be a vast charge and detail of trouble, without the least advantage. The flat boats should be thoroughly examined, ready to deliver to the respective ships as soon as possible.—I mention this, because when the Expedition was undertaken against Copenhagen, not one third of the boats could be put in a state of service in less than three weeks, and some of them were condemned as unserviceable. In general, Expeditions are so hurried off at the last, and with such little previous arrangement and attention to equipments, that it is the occupation of a long voyage to get all the appointments perfect; but here every thing must be perfect before it moves: every man must know his duty and every implement its place; for it is more than possible that the whole armament may be in action before it has time to sleep, after quitting the shores of England.—Mr. Congreve should be directed to examine the submarine locks as fast as possible, and see that they are in perfect order; to prepare 40 copper carcasses that will contain from two to three barrels, 20 that will contain 5 barrels, and 10 to contain 10 barrels.—A variety of articles will be wanted from the ordnance, a list of which shall be given in immediately. But the preceding preliminary arrange-

ments, with the formation of of the squadron of pilotage, are the first to be attended to."

*Charles-street, St. James's-square,  
13th June, 1809.*

"My lord; It did not occur to me on Sunday to mention, that as fast as the reinforcements could be spared from the operations on Walcheren, they would naturally relieve the Western regiments on Beveland, and the Eastern would by signals cross from Bathz to Sanfliet, their posts being occupied by the Western regiments successively; by which arrangement the reinforcements in series would join the Antwerp column within an hour after they could be spared from Walcheren.—As I hope your lordship is satisfied my mind is never at rest upon any subject I take up until it is completed, you will I am sure excuse the anxiety I express upon the present occasion. I see the season advancing fast, and if we are imperceptibly led on till the Midsummer fine weather is past, we shall have the most dreadful of all difficulties, the elements, to encounter; and those difficulties will be materially increased by the number of transports which will I fear attend this Expedition.—Transports are the greatest clog to every sort of Expedition, particularly those in which promptness and celerity are so essential to success; on this persuasion it was that I much pressed the dismantling a great proportion of the line-of-battle ships and embarking the troops in brigades in proportionate divisions of men of war with all their appointments and equipments and the number of horses, ready for them to go into action the very first instant of their landing.—When I have the honour of seeing your lordship again, I think I shall be better able to satisfy you of the expediency of this measure, especially when it applies to an object the success of which should not be hazarded by too strict a consideration of matters of mere formality.—I expect a person in a few days in town, from whom we shall derive much information as to the state of the landing-places in the river, which will be a considerable relief to me, as I do not like to place implicit confidence in my own recollection after such a lapse of time.—I again venture to press on your lordship how important it is to save even an hour, and to seize the favourable moment which is presented to us for accomplishing an undertaking not inferior in national importance to any on which the resources

of this empire have ever been employed. I have, &c.

*The Right Hon. Visc. HOME POPHAM.*  
*Castlereagh, &c.*

Sir *Home Popham*.—I have in my hand notes of the precise conversation which passed between lord Mulgrave and myself on the 4th of June, which I am ready to give in, if it is the pleasure of the Committee that they should be inserted in the minutes, instead of the statement I made from memory; the statements are the same in substance; there are no material variations.

The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

## 7.

*Jovis, 15<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

Rear Admiral Sir R. JOHN STRACHAN,  
called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Previous to the sailing of the Expedition were you consulted with by any of his Majesty's ministers, respecting the practicability of the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I was consulted.

At what time?—About the 19th of June.

By whom were you consulted, and what passed at that consultation?—I was sent for to the admiralty, when I saw lord Mulgrave, sir R. Bickerton, and Mr. Wellesley Pole; after some conversation capt. Plampin was sent for, and soon afterwards lord Castlereagh came in. After we had conversed upon the subject, particularly about the landing at Santvliet, lord Mulgrave proposed to send for sir Home Popham. In the previous conversation, I observed, that I thought there would be some difficulty in getting to the ulterior objects of the Expedition, as there might be greater difficulties in the navigation of the Scheldt than at present appeared. When sir H. Popham came in, he was consulted about a landing at Santvliet. I do not recollect any thing else particular.

What was the nature of those difficulties?—I conceived, that notwithstanding the government had reason to believe the enemy had very few troops in Flanders or in Holland, that in a very short time, long before we could get to Antwerp to accomplish the objects of the Expedition, the population of the country and the

troops in the different garrisons would be collected together in such numbers that the retreat of the army might be cut off if it passed above Antwerp: I also thought it would be necessary, to enable the navy to get up to Antwerp, to take the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and I knew that the enemy had a boom across from Lillo to Liefkenshoeik; at the same time I believed the intelligence that the government had received, that there were very few troops in Flanders or in Holland, but I could hardly conceive it possible an army could penetrate so far as Antwerp without being exposed to have their retreat cut off; for in the time it would take up to destroy the naval arsenals and to get at the enemy's ships, which I concluded would, to save themselves, go above Antwerp, the enemy would have an opportunity of collecting all his force from the garrison towns in France, Flanders, and Holland; and at that time it was rumoured, there would be a cessation of hostilities between France and Austria; these were my principal doubts of the success of the ulterior objects of the Expedition.

Were you, at that time, well acquainted with the navigation of the Scheldt?—No; I was not.

Did you imagine that the navigation of the Scheldt, up to Antwerp, was well known by any persons in the admiralty or in his Majesty's naval service at that time?—I do not think it was well known by any officers in his Majesty's naval service; but sir Home Popham had the most perfect knowledge, and next to him, I think, capt. Plampin.

Was any person placed under your orders, or with whom you were directed to communicate, or on whom to rely, with respect to the navigation of that river?—No; but there was a person whom the admiralty recommended me to trust with regard to his knowledge of the interior part of the Scheldt, and I have since found him very trust-worthy.

What is the Committee to understand by the interior part of the Scheldt?—From Flushing up to Lillo, and I should suppose up to Antwerp; but up to Lillo was the extent of the proof he gave us as to his knowledge.

Did you find any difficulty in advancing, for want of a sufficient knowledge of the navigation of the Scheldt?—Certainly we did; and it was necessary, before the fleet could proceed up the Scheldt, to have

the passages buoyed, which took up some time; for it would have been impossible that this person could have conducted the whole of the armament up the Scheldt, unless those passages could have been buoyed, for in the windings and intricacies of the navigation, the ships could not have followed each other.

Where were the channels buoyed, and what was the time taken up in so buoying them?—The different shoals were buoyed from the Hoogplaatt shoal along the different shoals by the Elvoetsdyke pass up to the island of Saeftingan; this is the best explanation I can give of the different passages; the exact time I cannot say.

About what time?—I think at least it was a week before it was completely buoyed; but during this time the ships of war and other vessels were constantly going up the Scheldt, as they got through the Slough Passage.

Was there more than one person on board your squadron, whose local knowledge could aid you in discovering the intricacies of the navigation of the Scheldt?—I think the only person, except the one I have referred to, who had any knowledge of the navigation of the Scheldt, was sir H. Popham, and it was sir Home who discovered and had the Elvoetsdyke passage buoyed.

Did you find sir Home Popham accurately acquainted with the navigation of the Scheldt, or were you obliged to sound as you advanced?—Sir Home Popham had a general notion of the Scheldt, but he did not exactly know where every shoal lay, nor the marks for avoiding those shoals; it was therefore necessary to have the different shoals pointed out by buoys, or vessels stationed as buoys.

Had you any accurate information of the different landing places in the island of Walcheren and Cadsand, or in the neighbourhood of Santvliet?—We had in the island of Walcheren and at Cadsand: not so perfectly at Cadsand, and at Santvliet only a general idea that there was a good landing-place; but sir Home Popham did state that an army could be landed at Santvliet, and captain Plampin corroborated that statement.

Do you conceive that the whole of this Expedition, with the artillery and horses, could in possibility have proceeded safely to Santvliet without the delay necessary to buoy the channel?—I should doubt very much that the whole would have proceeded in safety up the Scheldt with-

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out waiting to buoy; but I conceive a very great part of it would, by means that we should have taken to prevent accidents.

Do you know what portion of the armament was intended to act against Antwerp?—At this time I cannot exactly say what proportion; but it will appear in the orders that were given, and the arrangements that were made for the progress of the army, that the division of it under sir Eyre Coote was intended for Walcheren; the other part of the army, under lord Rosslyn (and with that part I concluded lord Chatham proposed to go) was intended for Antwerp, and would have been joined by lord Huntley's and sir John Hope's divisions.

Do you imagine that the force which you have now stated, together with the proportion of artillery and artillery horses, could with safety have been conveyed up the Western Scheldt without waiting to buoy the passage?—I have already given my opinion upon that head, that if every thing had been favourable as it was at first intended for our entering the Western Scheldt, we should certainly have endeavoured to proceed up without the delay of buoying the passages; but in consequence of our being under the necessity of going into the Roompot for security, owing to the blowing weather, the original tide of the Expedition was diverted to another channel, which was the reason we took time to buoy the Western Scheldt.

Had the Expedition not been diverted into another channel, would not the attempt to pass without buoying with so large a force have been attended with considerable risk?—It would have been attended with some risk; but the object, I think, would have justified the risk.

What length of time would it probably have taken to have conveyed that part of the Expedition from the mouth of the Scheldt to Santvliet, taking such precautions as were indispensable?—It is difficult to answer that question positively with regard to time, as it would a good deal depend upon the weather to enable us to place the different buoy vessels that were indispensably necessary to insure the armament passing up the Scheldt, through all the intricacies of that river; even when the different channels were buoyed we were obliged to have vessels with flags stationed at different parts as guides, independent of the buoys.

What length of time do you think it would have taken, supposing the weather to have been favourable?—I think the vessels might have been stationed almost as fast as the others could proceed up.

What length of time do you think it would have taken in favourable weather to have proceeded with that amount of force, from the mouth of the Scheldt to Santvliet?—I think in two or three days after they had passed Flushing; by the third day the whole might have been up.

Do you think they could have passed with the whole of the force, including transports, both Walcheren and Cadsand, without occupying either?—It is possible certainly to pass, but I think a very considerable loss and many accidents would have happened if such an attempt had been made.

Do you think it would have been practicable with transports?—It is practicable, under similar circumstances of great loss.

Would it not have required considerable time to have disembarked the troops, the horses, and the artillery in the neighbourhood of Santvliet?—I think it would not longer than a disembarkation at any other place.

What length of time would it probably have taken?—I think the whole of the infantry, and the artillery belonging to the infantry, would have been landed in one day, and a great part of the cavalry if not the whole; with regard to the battering-train, I cannot exactly state how long it might be, but not more than two days.

Do you know the nature of the beach?—Not from my own observation, but from sir H. Popham's report, I had reason to think the beach was good, and very proper for the disembarkation of infantry and cavalry; but I do not know what the country might be behind the dyke, as it was at too great a distance for us to observe from the mast heads of the vessels that lay near it, so that the country might have been inundated behind the bank, for aught I know, because a part of the country was observed to be in that state.

Would the time requisite for that disembarkation have depended much upon the state of the weather and the surf?—In that part of the river Scheldt near Santvliet, the weather would have very little interfered with us, but of course it would have retarded us a little; we may say half a day.

Do you know what number of men could disembark at one time from the whole of your fleet?—The fleet was never so collected as to make it an object to ascertain what number of men could be disembarked at once from the whole of the fleet; but an arrangement was made to land at Cadsand and Walcheren, and a division of the army on South Beveland, at the same time; and afterwards, when the army came up to Bathz, preparatory to landing at Santvliet, I understood from sir Richard Keats, with whom the arrangement for disembarking the troops was left, that he could have landed between 10 and 12,000 men in the course of a few hours.

Were you provided with the number of boats, flat boats, &c. mentioned in the memorandum of the admiralty, No. 1, dated the 9th of June?—We had more flat boats than are mentioned in that paper; I recollect Mr. Pole shewing me this paper in the secretary's room at the Admiralty, and I think, to the best of my recollection, I remarked that that would do very well, supposing we had the whole together, and that it would not do to put troops in the gun-boats, although some of the gun-boats might be made use of for that purpose. I consider that the means which the admiralty furnished were most ample, and that nothing was wanting to forward the success of the Expedition on the part of the admiralty; if I had thought there had been any thing wanted, I should have stated it, and I am sure it would have been complied with immediately; I believe all the flat boats in this country went with the Expedition, and besides that, a great number of rowing and sailing boats were hired at Deal, and added to the means of landing the troops, as well as buoying the passages of the Scheldt.

Were you acquainted with the state of the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik?—From observation it appeared to me that they were in a perfect state of defence, but it had been represented to the government that these forts had been much neglected, and were not in a state to resist an attack upon them.

Did either lord Castlereagh or lord Mulgrave make any observation upon the statement you made, of the difficulties that would attend the navigation to Antwerp?—I do not recollect that they did; I know that lord M. was extremely anxious about the Expedition, and upon my

remarking to him that I thought all we should do would be taking Walcheren, he said that the country would be very little satisfied with such an expensive armament doing nothing more than taking Walcheren; I remarked to his lordship that I was fearful it would turn out so, that for my part I knew nothing of the navigation, but that I would do my best to accomplish all the objects of the Expedition, and that I should be very ready to serve under any officer they had more confidence in than me; lord M. observed that he had the fullest confidence in me, and that he had reason to think we should do very well.

Did you see, previous to the Expedition, the military opinion that was given by the Commander in Chief?—Yes, I have read it.

Had you read it previous to the sailing of the Expedition?—I had.

By whom was it communicated to you, and when?—That among others was sent to me by the Admiralty, early after the 19th of June.

What others do you allude to?—gen. Alex. Hope's, gen. Calvert's, col. Gordon's, and gen. Brownrigg's, together with some memoirs of sir H. Popham's. There were other papers, not of much consequence.

When you returned those opinions, did you make any comments upon them?—I did not.

Did they occasion any alteration in your opinion?—They rather confirmed my own opinion, that the success of the Expedition was doubtful.

You have mentioned that one of the objections to the fleet proceeding to Antwerp, was a boom between the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik; do you know when that boom was placed there?—I think it was placed, if I am to believe the intelligence we got, in the month of April.

How soon after the 2d of August, when the fort of Bathz was taken, was the British navy in possession of the Bergen-op-Zoom channel and the Western Scheldt?—The Bergen-op-Zoom channel or a part of it, I think, but I cannot speak positively, was occupied by the navy on the 3d of August, and in the Western Scheldt about the 9th, and on the 10th some of the flotilla got up to Bathz.

How long was it before the British navy were in full possession of the anchorage at Bathz?—When the flotilla got up there,

the navy might be said to be in possession of the anchorage; it is not a regular anchorage, it is only a reach in the river; I wish not to be understood to state positively that our flotilla was up by the 10th, but I think it was; it was under the command of sir H. Popham.

Did you understand that there was a ford found between the island of South Beveland and the main land near Bergen-op-Zoom?—I knew of that ford; it had been there many years.

Was not the possession of Flushing considered in a naval and military point of view, as of the greatest importance to this country?—I thought so; and think so still.

What number of line-of-battle ships is the basin of Flushing capable of containing?—I believe 20 sail of large ships might be moored in the basin.

What depth of water was there in the basin at high-water and spring tides?—I cannot positively say, but I believe 23 feet.

In 23 feet of water, could 20 sail of the line, having their guns and stores on board, and having two months provisions, go out by the Scheldt in one tide?—No, it would be necessary to lighten the ships to enable them to go out of the basin; there is a bar at the entrance of the basin, therefore I believe the ships cannot go into the basin or come out of the basin with their guns, for I know in the month of March or April when the enemy had reason to think it was intended by this government to attack Walcheren, they hurried their ships out without either their guns or stores, and they went up to Terneuse to take their guns and stores in, which were sent after them in schuyts. The great advantage that the enemy had derived from the basin was, that their ships could lie in security from the ice, and being at the mouth of the river Scheldt, could sooner go to sea than they would have been able if they fitted out at Antwerp; and I have heard that in consequence of our having possession of Walcheren, they have been obliged to make slips for their ships above Antwerp, that they may be clear of the ice, so that it would be very difficult, if not impracticable, for the enemy to fit out a squadron in the winter.

In the event of the enemy ever being enabled to fit out a fleet of 40 or 50 sail of the line to cover a landing in this country, would it not be necessary to have a fleet to windward to be able to act

against the enemy, when our fleets to leeward probably would be rendered, in case of a continuance of easterly winds, totally insufficient?—By to windward, I suppose, is meant near the coast of Walcheren. If the enemy had a fleet of 30 or 40 sail, we should of course, I conclude, have a fleet of the same number of vessels at proper times stationed near the coast of Walcheren.

Would it not be extremely dangerous to keep an English fleet upon an enemy's coast, without having any port or any shelter for our ships?—It would be dangerous, but it might be necessary.

Would not the possession of Flushing have greatly lessened that danger?—Yes, with regard to the ships; but the expence of keeping Flushing, and the great loss of men that would attend it, makes it a more advisable thing not to keep the island of Walcheren.

Did you ever hear an idea suggested, of the possibility of insulating Flushing and cutting it off entirely from the island of Walcheren, when it would require a very small garrison to hold it, and consequently the loss by sickness would be so much decreased?—I have heard of it, but I never approved of it; the consequence would be, the anchorage would be so contracted that no considerable number of ships could lie off the town.

How could it possibly contract the anchorage by insulating Flushing?—The enemy would get possession of Ramekins and the coast near it, and would of course annoy all the shipping that lay towards that end of Flushing; and towards the mouth of the Scheldt, and on the Duerloo side of Flushing, the anchorage is not very secure for small vessels.

Do not you think that by inundating a great part of the island of Walcheren, near Flushing, that would have been prevented?—I do not think it could have prevented the enemy from getting Ramekins and the Dyke towards Flushing.

What did you consider as the ultimate and most material object of the Expedition?—I considered the destruction of the enemy's fleet, and the destroying the dockyard and arsenal at Antwerp, the great object of the Expedition, combined with the destruction of the dock-yard, bason, and arsenal at Walcheren.

Did you consider the destruction of the docks and arsenal at Antwerp as a material object of the Expedition?—I did.

Do you know whether the last anchor-

age occupied by the enemy's fleet was under the protection of the guns of the citadel at Antwerp?—A part of the enemy's fleet lay on the sea face of Antwerp, and of course they were within the range of the guns of the citadel; but I doubt if the enemy had any batteries or guns mounted on the wharfs at Antwerp; the enemy had Antwerp on their right, and the Tête de Flandre on their left.

Could a landing have been effected at Santvliet, without being in possession of the fort of Bathz?—It might have been, but it would have been proper to have possession of the fort of Bathz, because in passing that fort the ships and boats would have been under the fire of it, and must have suffered very considerable loss; but Bathz surrendered without the least opposition.

Had you reason to be satisfied with the professional judgment and resources of sir H. Popham, while acting under your orders in the Scheldt?—Most fully so.

You have stated, that supposing the whole fleet had attempted to pass up the Scheldt without buoys, a great part might have reached Santvliet, though some might not; supposing some of the ships had stranded, was it probable that the troops on board those ships might have been transferred to other vessels that would still have passed on?—They certainly would have taken out of those vessels, and the object of the Expedition might have been gained, that is, the landing the troops, notwithstanding some of the vessels got on shore; and indeed buoyed as the river was, every day we had several vessels on shore, and some lay for a considerable time, but they were all at last got off.

Did you understand that the design of government was to take Antwerp by a joint attack of the army and the navy?—I certainly knew that government did expect the army and navy would co-operate heartily to gain the object of the Expedition, and therefore any attempt that was made upon Antwerp would be by a co-operation of the two services.

Did you understand that government considered the co-operation of the navy as necessary to the taking of Antwerp?—I conclude the government expected it.

Did government furnish you with any plan of the existing state of the fortifications of Antwerp?—No; I had never seen any.

Had you reason to know, from your communications with government, that

they were in possession of any plan of the existing state of the fortifications of Antwerp?—I do not know whether government had any plans.

From your communications with government, did you suppose them to know whether the Scheldt was navigable for ships of the line above Antwerp, or not?—In conversations I had with lord Mulgrave and some of the members of the board of admiralty, I think they did not seem to understand that ships of the line could go above Antwerp. I was always of opinion myself that they could, and it has turned out since that they have gone above Antwerp, and that was one of my reasons for thinking that we should find it a difficult matter to destroy the enemy's fleet if they should go above Antwerp, and our army not be able to gain possession of that place.

Is the Committee to understand, that your opinion was not distinctly taken by government upon the fact, whether ships of the line could pass above Antwerp or not?—I could not satisfy government upon that head, because I had no local knowledge myself, and it was quite matter of opinion with me; I stated my opinion from my observation of the last French survey.

Was your opinion asked upon that point?—My opinion was asked, and I gave that answer.

Were you furnished by government with any plan of the state of the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoek?—I was not; and I do not believe government had any plans.

State to the Committee, whether previously to the sailing of the Expedition you were ever consulted, conjointly with the commander in chief of that Expedition, on the best modes of carrying it into effect, either by lord Mulgrave or lord Castlereagh?—I was frequently consulted by lord Mulgrave, and lord Castlereagh was occasionally present; and I frequently had interviews with lord Chatham; but there never was a meeting between lord Chatham and any of the members of the government and myself.

What day did you appear off the Scheldt with the fleet under your command?—It was the 28th of July.

At what time were you enabled to put that part of your instructions into execution to push up a sufficient amount of your force above the town of Flushing, to prevent the escape of any vessels in Flushing,

or the vicinity of it, up the Scheldt?—I think it was the 2d or 3d of August at a considerable part of the flotilla got into the West Scheldt; it was not necessary to push any part of the larger ships into the Scheldt, in compliance with that part of my orders, because the enemy had no force at Flushing that the gun-boats could not intercept; indeed at that time they had not any armed vessel in the mouth of the Scheldt. A part of the squadron would have been ordered into the Scheldt, if I had not received intelligence that the enemy's fleet had got above the boom at Lillo; I therefore did not consider it was proper to expose the ships unnecessarily when no object could be obtained by it.

Then the Committee is to understand, you could have pushed a proportion of your fleet up the Scheldt sooner, but for the reason you have given?—Yes, certainly we might.

In case you had pushed any part of your fleet above the town of Flushing, would it not have prevented the reinforcements passing from Cadsand to Flushing?

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

[The witness was again called in; and informed by the Chairman, that if any question was put to him, the answer to which would in his opinion tend in any degree to inculpate or criminate himself, he was at liberty to refuse answering it.]

In case you had pushed any part of your fleet above the town of Flushing, would it not have prevented the reinforcements passing from Cadsand to Flushing? No, it would not; and at the time those reinforcements did pass, there was none of the fleet in a situation to pass into the Scheldt except the division under commodore Owen, and as he was employed upon that particular service of landing at Cadsand to destroy the batteries, he could not well push into the Scheldt; and if he had done so, he would have been liable to suffer very great damage from the batteries of Cadsand. Lord Gardner with his division, as will be seen by his orders already before the Committee, was ordered to co-operate with commodore Owen, and to push into the Scheldt after the batteries of Cadsand were taken; but when in consequence of the weather we found it necessary to go into the East Scheldt (that is into the Roompot) for the security of the armament, I sent orders to commo-



dore Owen not to land, but to preserve a menacing position; and lord Gardner had similar orders to anchor at the mouth of the Duerloo for the same purpose, that the enemy might imagine we intended to land somewhere about Zoutland Bay; and it answered this good purpose, that the enemy never detached any of his force to prevent our landing where we did, upon the Bree Sand nor Dunhack Battery. The pilots in lord Gardner's division of the squadron would not take charge of the large ships, either to pass them into the Weilin or into the Duerloo, and therefore it was not in his lordship's power to pass into the Scheldt, even if he had been ordered; if this division had pushed into the Scheldt, they would have been obliged to anchor above Flushing and Cadsand, and as it blew too hard for boats to keep in the space between those two places, the enemy could always with the wind, as it was S. S. W. send reinforcements over, either in the day or night; and this will appear by commodore Owen's statement, who exerted himself to the utmost to prevent it; indeed it blew so hard at one time that the gun-boats were under the necessity of leaving the West Scheldt, and dropping into the Slow passage for security.

Then the Committee is to understand, there was no part of your fleet that was in a situation to go up the Scheldt, on your first appearance off the Scheldt?—There was not; but it was intended that lord Gardner should have gone into the Scheldt, as I have said before, after the batteries of Cadsand were taken, and orders were given to him in conformity to the orders I had received from the admiralty, upon the idea that the enemy's fleet was in a situation to be attacked by ours; but when I found that the enemy's fleet had gone again up the Scheldt, it did not appear to me of so much importance pushing and risking our large ships through the dangerous shoals at the entrance of that river, and therefore I countenanced lord Gardner in remaining at an anchor in the West Putt, that is, off West Cappel, as by that means he was in a situation to assist commodore Owen with his boats, in case we had found it necessary to land upon Cadsand or to push in through the Duerloo or Weilin passages, when we could get pilots to take charge of the ships.

If you had thought it necessary, could not you have got the ships up between the 2d and the 8th of August?—I cannot ex-

actly at this moment answer to dates, but I think long before the 8th of August I sent orders for a squadron of frigates to push into the Scheldt, meaning that they should go up to Bathz; but those frigates did not pass the batteries till the 11th, owing to several causes of wind and weather that prevented them; but I do not think the public service suffered from those frigates not passing in sooner, and indeed as it was they were in sufficient time at Bathz to give countenance to any operations of the army.

Do you admit, that between the 2d and the 8th of August, the orders you gave for those frigates might have been obeyed?—In the interval between the 7th, I think, and the time that the frigates passed in, I sent an order to suspend their going in, by which order a day was lost; that was in consequence of some reports I had heard; the last order to enforce the frigates going into the Scheldt, and the line-of-battle ships going into Dyeeshook Bay, was to the best of my recollection, upon the 8th, and it was executed as soon as it possibly could be.

Did you not write a letter on the 27th of August to the admiralty?—Yes, I did.

Was that letter of a public or a private nature?—Any letter that I wrote to the secretary of the admiralty (and that letter I believe was published) was of a public nature.

Did you ever express a concern that that letter was published?—When I wrote the letter, it was with an impression that the country would be very much dissatisfied that more was not done, and I thought it was due to myself and to the navy, to state to that branch of the government, that I was under (the admiralty) that we were desirous to go on, or that we had taken all the measures necessary to go on; and therefore I wrote this letter; I certainly, when I wrote the letter, did not think it would be published, but I was wrong in thinking so; if I had thought it would have been published, I should have been more cautious in wording it, that it might not convey a reflection upon lord Chatham or the army. When I saw the letter afterwards in the paper, it struck me very forcibly that it would be the means of making a breach between the two services, and then of course I expressed how very sorry I was that I had worded the letter in that manner; at the same time I observed to lord Chatham, and indeed to many officers of the army, that I must have writ-

ten a similar letter, for it was only a statement of facts; but I might have put it together in such a manner as not to be offensive, for in the way it was worded it appeared like casting a reflection upon lord Chatham and the principal officers of the army, and I am very glad to have this opportunity of explaining myself, because I did not mean to cast any reflection upon lord Chatham, or the superior officers of the army, or any of the movements of the army, for I am not a judge of military matters. At the same time I could not help regretting, and I do at this moment regret most sincerely, that, having been brought up as we were to the point of attack upon the enemy, and having worked our people up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, we should have been under the necessity of retiring. From what has happened since in consequence of the sickness of the army, I am convinced that it was the wisest measure that the commander in chief of the army could pursue; for I doubt very much whether his lordship would have been able to accomplish the fall of Antwerp, considering the season of the year, the very sickly state of the troops, and the increasing force of the enemy; but as we did not see much force, I thought, and I still do think, that we ought to have attacked Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, which might have opened a field to some enterprise or other, and might have been the means of our even getting hold of the enemy's fleet; And it was with this impression I wrote my letter.

Did you ever consult with the commander in chief of the army about attacking forts Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and going forward?—On the 24th of August, sir H. Popham and myself went to head quarters to dine with lord Chatham, and at that time his lordship did not speak at all as if he had doubts about going on; at the same time his lordship mentioned that the enemy were increasing in force. Sir H. Popham spoke a good deal in favour of the beach for landing the army on, and this was the general conversation that passed at that time; however, his lordship proposed coming to Bathz on the following day, which was the 25th, and there in conversation with me he first spoke of retiring, mentioning the increased force of the enemy, the advanced season (and we had certainly very bad weather) and the sickly state of the troops, the army was just then beginning to be sickly, and he seemed to hint to me, that he wished for

some letter from me upon the subject. Accordingly, on the next day I wrote to his lordship; and that letter accompanied mine to the admiralty of the 27th of August, and is before the Committee; in that letter it will appear, that I proposed an attack upon Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, with a view of opening a field to further enterprise; this was the only conversation or correspondence I had with his lordship upon that subject; I think that letter was dated the 26th of August.

Did you not write a letter to lord Chatham on the 27th of August?—I do not recollect whether I did or not; but if the subject of the letter is stated it may bring it to my recollection.

In case the proposition of attacking Fort Lillo had been successful, do you think the fleet might have gone up so as to have attacked Antwerp, or in what way, to have taken possession of the French fleet?—If Lillo and Liefkenshoeik had been taken the fleet would certainly have gone up, that is, the frigates and flotilla would, and probably some of the ships of the line, and it would have remained to be discovered whether the works at Antwerp would prevent our passing Antwerp to attack the French fleet. I think to the best of my recollection, by this time the French fleet was brought down before Antwerp; five sail of the line had been up above it. When we conversed on the propriety of attacking Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, sir Richard Keats was in company with me, and most of the lieut. generals of the army, except lord Paget and lord Huntley; I then stated that I thought Lillo might be attacked with a large proportion of the army, and that a small proportion of it might be landed on the Doel side to attack Liefkenshoeik, and that I thought it necessary that the army should occupy the dykes on both banks of the river. We had a great deal of conversation upon this subject, and it was the opinion of the officers of the army then present, that we should have little prospect of succeeding in the ulterior objects of the Expedition even if we succeeded in taking Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and that considering the state of things, it would be injudicious to make the attempt; but I had no doubt of our having it in our power to pass the frigates and several ships of the line, indeed we should have attempted to do it, up towards Antwerp, if Lillo and Liefkenshoeik had been taken.

'You think there was no impediment by the boom or chain that was said to have been laid across?—Yes, the boom and chain was an impediment, but it might have been forced.

In the interview you had with lord Mulgrave on the 19th of June, was any chart exhibited to you, shewing the soundings and the different courses of the navigation of the Scheldt?—Yes, a very good chart, the last French survey, which we since found to be very correct.

An engraved chart?—Yes.

Was that chart, or a copy of it, delivered to you before you sailed?—As many of those charts as could be collected were divided among the different ships of war of the fleet.

Did you find that the soundings in your progress up the Scheldt as far as Bathz, answered completely to those charts?—Nearly so, allowing for the different times of tide.

As well on the Eastern Scheldt as the Western Scheldt?—The chart was a chart of the West Scheldt only.

Was there any chart or any drawing of the soundings and course of the East Scheldt?—We had a chart of the East Scheldt, but not so correct as that of the West Scheldt, and the soundings very incorrect, but it was the best chart that could be procured; indeed, every paper that could be collected to give us information was sent to us by the admiralty, and the greatest pains were taken to procure pilots for the Expedition.

In any of those charts was the ford in the Bergen-op-Zoom passage described?—No, it was not.

In your interview with lord Mulgrave, were you made acquainted with the fact of there being a ford there?—We had no conversation respecting it, and I doubt if it was generally understood that there was a ford there.

Were you aware of such a circumstance before you sailed?—No, I was not.

Did lord Chatham send you any answer to the letter you wrote to his lordship on the 26th of August?—I did receive an answer from lord Chatham; I think it was dated the 27th; it is in the paper before the Committee.

At the time you thought the attack on Lillo and Liefkenshoeik practicable, was the wind favourable?—No, it was not.

Within what space of time, reckoning from the day you sailed from the Downs, do you think that 20,000 men could have

been landed at Santvliet, reckoning for all circumstances of wind, weather, shoals, and oppositions from the enemy?—With the wind and weather we had, and the impediments that we met with, I doubt if it would have been possible to have made a proper landing on Santvliet till the 10th or 12th of August, if so soon as that, because we found a great difficulty in getting the transports which had the heavy ordnance of the army, and provisions and other stores, through the Slough Passage into the West Scheldt, owing to their being obliged to pass through a swash-way on the Calnot-shoal which was under the fire of Flushing; it was not till after the fall of Flushing that the heavy ordnance and all the cavalry got through, and therefore if the army did land at Santvliet, which it certainly might have done before, it must have gone without the heavy artillery and many stores necessary to a siege: I beg leave to correct myself in my answer, that I do not mean to say we had 20,000 men to land, because a great part of the army was employed in investing Flushing, therefore there was not that number of men to be landed as well as I can recollect.

Supposing it had been the primary object, in sailing from the Downs, to land 20,000 men at Santvliet; within what time could it have been accomplished, in the circumstances stated in the last question?—I find it very difficult to answer the question; I hardly know how I can do it satisfactorily, either to myself or the Committee. It certainly was intended by government, as will be seen by my instructions, that a part of the force should invest Flushing, and that the other part should go up the Scheldt and land at Santvliet, to accomplish the ulterior object of the Expedition, to attack Antwerp and destroy the French fleet; but, as I have before stated, this force was diverted into another channel owing to stress of weather, and in consequence of the whole armament going into the Roompot, that part of the army which was intended to be landed at Santvliet was landed upon South Beveland, and I do not think I am competent to answer what were the reasons of the general for not ordering the army to advance: I conceive, however, that his lordship waited till there was a sufficient naval force in the West Scheldt, before he exposed the army by advancing so far into the country, and probably he might be influenced by the prevailing re-

ports of an armistice between France and Austria; it will, therefore, be very difficult for me to answer the question satisfactorily to the Committee any further than as I have done.

Was it a part of the original plan that 20,000 men should go to Santvliet, without taking possession of South Beveland?—No, it was always intended to take possession of South Beveland; indeed it was necessary to take possession of South Beveland, to destroy the batteries that commanded the West Scheldt; the enemy had batteries upon every point going up that river, and the fort of Batz was a very considerable work of its kind, and if the enemy had thought proper to hold out, it would have taken us up some time before it could have been carried.

What number of the 20,000 men of which you have spoken, do you think would have been occupied in the taking and keeping possession of South Beveland?—South Beveland was taken by the division under general Hope, I think about 7,000 men, and I believe, but I cannot speak positively, that it was the intention of lord Chatham to leave 2,000 men on South Beveland.

Then the Committee is to understand that of the 20,000 men before referred to, 2,000 would have been diverted from that number to keep possession of South Beveland?—I believe it was so intended, but I cannot speak positively, as I never conversed with lord Chatham upon these subjects.

In the plan of the Expedition communicated to you, what was the arrangement made by which the navy were to co-operate in the attack upon Antwerp?—There was no arrangement, it was left to the commander in chief; and I for my part did not think it necessary to propose one until the field was open to us, as no correct arrangement could be made till we came upon the spot, and into action; what I mean by action, is making a movement.

At what time did you think it was fit to make an arrangement for a joint attack upon Antwerp?—Whenever it was decided upon to land the army at Santvliet, and for the navy to move to the attack of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, the arrangement would then have been made for the conjunct attack on Antwerp.

Was any such arrangement for an attack on Antwerp discussed in the conversations with lord Chatham on the 24th

of August, to which you have before alluded?—No.

Was any such arrangement suggested on the 24th of August by you to lord Chatham?—No, there was not.

Was any such arrangement suggested by you to lord Chatham on the 27th of August?—No, because I did not consider it necessary, nor could any arrangement be made till after Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were taken.

Is the Committee to understand that the arrangements for the joint operation of the army and navy in the attack on Antwerp were not to be made till the army and navy were close upon Antwerp?—Certainly not, because when it was decided to land the army at Santvliet, and to attack the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, the arrangement would then have been made between the general and myself for the joint attack on Antwerp, for it was not certain whether we should get to Antwerp or not; and as I knew nothing of the defences of Antwerp, an arrangement could not have been made till we had opened the way by taking Lillo and Liefkenshoeik.

When you proposed to lord Chatham attacking Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, did you communicate to him what your further plans would have been as to arrangements against Antwerp, in the event of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik being taken?—The conversation I had with lord Chatham and the general officers then present went to the attacking of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, with a view of opening a field to further enterprize, and obtaining more local knowledge than we possessed; without possessing more local knowledge than we did it would not have been possible to make any permanent arrangement for the conjunct attack upon Antwerp: I did propose, when Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were taken, to have pushed the frigates and flotilla up the Scheldt towards Antwerp, and our further operations and success would have depended upon circumstances.

Did you communicate that it was your intention to push forward the frigates and flotilla to Antwerp to lord Chatham on the 27th of August?—I do not know whether I mentioned frigates exactly, but I spoke of the ships of war, and pointed out the necessity of the army occupying both banks of the river.

In what manner did you propose to lord Chatham to attack fort Lillo?—With regard to the manner of attacking fort

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Lillo on the land side I could make no proposition to his lordship with propriety, as it was a military operation; but I did say that the ships of war would attack the fort at the same time that the army did.

Did you form any idea what length of time it might take to get possession of fort Lillo?—I could form no judgment.

What plan did you propose for the attacking of Liefkenshoeik?—A similar one to that of attacking Lillo; we intended to have lightened two ships of the line, and placed one against each of these forts, and with a third and fourth ship to have attempted to force the boom, but it would have been necessary to have a favourable wind for this purpose, and the river is very winding about that part; but I did not enter into this detail before lord Chatlam, it was only a matter of conversation with the sea officers; I barely mentioned to his lordship that if the army attacked the forts, he should have every naval assistance it was in my power to offer.

In the event of the ships not breaking the boom, was not that boom so constructed as to bring the ship immediately under the battery of Liefkenshoeik?—I think it was, and I think the undertaking would have been very hazardous.

Does fort Lillo command fort Liefkenshoeik?—From the view I have of them, I cannot positively say whether it does or not, but it appears to me to stand rather higher.

Do you know whether fort Liefkenshoeik commands Lillo?—I do not know.

Are there not dykes in the banks of the Scheldt, on which guns might have been placed to annoy or obstruct the passage of vessels up the Scheldt?—Yes; and it was for that reason that I wished the army to occupy both banks of the Scheldt.

Do you know any thing of the works at the Tete de Flandre, on the left bank of the Scheldt, opposite to Antwerp?—I do not.

If with the English fleet you had attempted to pass up the Scheldt, might not the French fleet have been carried above Antwerp?—Yes, I think they would have carried their ships above Antwerp.

In the event of the French fleet being carried above Antwerp, do you think that with the English fleet you could have ventured to pass between the citadel of Antwerp and the works on the Tete de Flandre?—I doubt whether we should have done it or not; but I cannot say what I would have done till I came suffi-

ciently near to see whether it was practicable.

What is the width of the Scheldt at Antwerp?—I cannot say; I never was there.

In the ignorance of the width of the Scheldt, and with the uncertainty whether it would have been safe to pass between the citadel of Antwerp and the Tete de Flandre, would you, if Liefkenshoeik and Lillo had been taken, have still ventured up the Scheldt with the English fleet?—I should have gone as far up the Scheldt as the army could have gone to co-operate with us, and I should have taken no more ships with me than was necessary; and if I discovered that it was not practicable with any prospect of success to pass Antwerp and the Tete de Flandre, I should have returned back again.

When you talk of the field for further enterprize that would have been opened by taking Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, had you any other object in view than an attack on the ships at Antwerp?—The capture or destruction of the enemy's flotilla and the ships that were below Antwerp, and to discover whether there was a probability of success in going further on.

Can you form any judgment of the probable loss of the army in its attack upon the two forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik?—I think both the army and navy must have lost many men, as both services would have been very much exposed.

Supposing the army to have suffered very much, which you think probable, in its attack upon those two forts, would it have been in a condition to have reached along either bank of the Scheldt if the enemy had a considerable force in Antwerp to oppose them?—I think it would not have been prudent to have advanced if many men were lost, and the enemy were in great force; but it is impossible to say whether many men would have been lost or not, and it would have depended a good deal upon the general whether he thought he should be justified in running the risk of advancing along the dykes.

Have you not stated that it was probable many men would be lost in the military and naval service, as they would be exposed to the fire from the enemy's fort?—Yes, I have already said so.

Your opinion was, that it was necessary the British army should occupy each bank of the Scheldt, and march

along each bank of the Scheldt as the British fleet advanced to attack Antwerp; was I right in so understanding you?—Yes, that was what I proposed in the course of our conversation, but it was more conversation with the generals than any regular proposition. I am not quite positive that I have been perfectly correct in every statement I have made, because I did not come prepared to answer many questions that have been put to me; therefore, I hope I shall be indulged, if I discover that I have been making mis-statements, to correct them both with regard to dates and other matters.

You have stated that you would have approached Antwerp with the ships, and that if you had found it necessary you would have withdrawn them again; what is your opinion as to the manner in which the army, which was to have accompanied the fleet on both sides of the Scheldt, could have made its retreat, if the enemy had had a superior force at Antwerp?—It was upon the supposition that the enemy were in considerable force, that I thought the army should not embarrass itself by going too far inland; and that in case it was likely to be assailed by a superior force, they could always retreat from the dyke into the vessels that would accompany them up the river, and the army could be furnished with ammunition and provisions from the vessels going up the river; if the general thought it necessary to retreat, I should of course have given him all the assistance that was necessary, and fallen back with the army.

In the event of forts Liefkenshoeik and Lillo being taken, you have stated that it was necessary for the army to take possession of both sides of the river before the fleet could advance to Antwerp; when you gave that opinion, were you aware that the part of the army on the left bank would be exposed to the whole force the enemy could collect in French Flanders?—Yes, I was; and I conclude that that was one of the reasons that lord Chatham did not agree to second my proposition.

Were you aware that the country between Antwerp and Lillo could be inundated, and that the march of the army would have been confined to the dyke and the bank of the river?—Yes; I think the country was inundated in part, and therefore I thought the army could only co-operate with the navy by occupying the banks of the river.

Supposing it had been practicable to

land the army at Santvliet at an early period after the sailing of the Expedition, with its stores, artillery, and equipments, would it have been necessary, in order to attack Antwerp, to have taken Lillo and Liefkenshoeik at all?—I believe, when the government first thought of the Expedition to Antwerp, it was not understood that Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were in the state they really are in, and therefore I imagine it was intended that the army upon being landed at Santvliet, should push on to Antwerp as rapidly as possible; but by such a movement, and Lillo and Liefkenshoeik not being taken, the army would have been separated from the navy all the distance from Santvliet to Antwerp; and, considering, as I then did, and do now, that it was in the power of the enemy to collect a very considerable force, I do not think it would have been a wise measure, and without the co-operation of the navy, I doubt whether the army would have succeeded in taking or destroying the enemy's ships of war, and therefore I considered the taking of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik as indispensable.

You have spoken of taking or destroying the enemy's ships of war; supposing the enemy's ships of war to have gone up above Antwerp, would it not have been a great object to destroy the dock-yard and the ships that were building at Antwerp?—Yes, certainly; it was part of our instructions to do so; and we should have attempted to do it, if it had appeared practicable when we came to the place.

If the army had been able to take the town of Antwerp at an early period, do you know of any reason why the dock-yard and ships building there, might not have been destroyed without the assistance of the navy?—No, certainly; if the army had taken Antwerp, the dock-yard and shipping might have been destroyed without the assistance of the navy.

Supposing the army to have taken possession of Cadsand, in your opinion could the batteries of the island of Walcheren have opposed any obstacles to vessels passing up or down the Scheldt?—No, they could not.

From the bend of the river and the diagonal position of the boom, are you of opinion, that with a leading wind, it is probable your ships would have had headway sufficient to have broken the boom?—We had always doubts whether we should succeed in it or not.

When you stated, that you thought, in case of the army having possession of Antwerp, the docks and arsenals might have been destroyed, did you mean the possession of the citadel of Antwerp?—I conceived that the army could not possess Antwerp without having possession of the citadel: I believe the citadel commands the dock-yard.

Then you think, that the dock-yard and arsenal would not have been destroyed if the citadel had remained in possession of the enemy?—I am not sufficiently acquainted with Antwerp to give an opinion on this subject.

Do you not consider the weather to have been extremely unfavourable, particularly to the ulterior objects of the Expedition, from the time of your arrival off Walcheren?—I certainly do.

Was it not more unfavourable than at that season of the year might have been reasonably expected?—Most certainly; and from the bad weather we experienced in the beginning of the Expedition, the delay in proceeding up the Scheldt arose.

Had it not been for the unfavourable state of the weather, are you not of opinion that the operation upon Cadsand would have succeeded?—I think it would.

Had the operation upon Cadsand succeeded, would not the passage up the Scheldt, coupled with the occupation of South Beveland, have been open for the men of war and the transports as far as Santvliet?—Yes, it would.

What length of time would it have taken to have carried up the fleet to Santvliet, supposing Cadsand to have been taken and the wind reasonably fair?—If Cadsand had been taken, and that division of the fleet which was intended to have gone up the Scheldt, had not gone into the Roompot, it might very shortly have got up to Santvliet: I think in four days the whole armament might have been up, allowing the wind and weather to be favourable.

I think you have already said, that the part of the armament, which was destined to go up the West Scheldt, going into the Roompot, was owing to the badness of the weather?—I have said so.

Had you any information of the number of the enemy's force at Cadsand at the time it was proposed to land there?—No; when the Expedition was formed, Cadsand was not a part of it; but afterwards it was agreed it was necessary to take Cadsand, for the purpose of passing up the Scheldt

with more facility, and not to wait for the capture of Flushing; at first a regiment was thought sufficient, after that a brigade was mentioned, and at last it came to a division of the army; then our squadron was increased in proportion; I do not believe that the government thought the enemy could send any considerable force to Cadsand; I did not think so myself; and I thought that the force that was ordered for Cadsand, both on the part of the army and navy, fully sufficient for the purpose; just before the Expedition sailed, it struck me that there might be a want of boats, and then I ordered the division of lord Gardner to place itself in readiness to assist with his boats to ensure the landing, and I considered at that time, and I now do consider, that I made the most ample provision for that service, for I could not conceive, with the intelligence that we had, that the enemy could collect such a force as to resist that which we sent against Cadsand, and therefore I was much surprised when we arrived in the Stone Deep, to hear from commodore Owen that the enemy were in considerable force, and as the weather was so very bad that we were obliged to go into the Roompot, from the apprehension that many of our transports would drive on shore, and that great part of our flotilla if not the whole might be sunk; after consulting with lord Chatham, it was agreed to direct commodore Owen to suspend his landing; and I believe there were very few days, if those orders had not been given, that the commodore could have landed the troops; if he had not had those orders and had succeeded in landing the troops and destroying the batteries upon Cadsand, we should still have found a difficulty in getting the transports out of the East Scheldt into the West Scheldt, on account of the wind blowing in and generally blowing very fresh.

What were the reasons which induced government to alter the force destined for Cadsand, first from a regiment to a brigade, and then from a brigade to a division?—It was not the government, it was the act of lord Chatham and myself; when I say lord Chatham and myself, I mean to include the officers we trusted to.

Was that alteration made in consequence of intelligence of additional force having arrived or being about to arrive at Cadsand?—No; it was in consequence of our thinking Cadsand of greater importance than it was at first thought; it was not in-

tended, after the batteries were destroyed, that the army should remain on Cadsand, and they were to embark again directly under certain circumstances of regulation.

What induced lord Chatham and yourself to think that a larger force was necessary to take possession of Cadsand than you had originally considered necessary for that service?—Because we thought if the enemy had timely notice of the Expedition, he might send a force into Cadsand with a view of succouring Flushing, and we did not like to subject the force we sent against it to a repulse; we wished to ensure the execution of the service.

Supposing the fleet to have passed up the Scheldt, and in case of failure to have been forced to return, could it have done so without a shift of wind?—No, it could not, it must have tided it down.

Would it have been possible to have moved the heavy ordnance and cavalry transports that were in the Slough passage, and which were destined to act against Antwerp, into the West Scheldt, at any time before the surrender of Flushing took place?—We were endeavouring to do it from the time that we first landed on Walcheren, but the channel was so narrow and the wind blowing directly into it, prevented any number of vessels being got through, and it was not till after the fall of Flushing, the whole got through; all that was possible to be done in this way I think was done.

Had you not reason to expect strong westerly winds at the time of year you went on the enemy's coast?—Yes, and it was for that reason that we thought of the Roompot, and made our arrangement to go in there in case it blew hard when we came upon the coast; this was decided upon, a day or two before we left Deal, and we had some conversation with lord Castlereagh upon this subject.

Then it must have struck you, as being extremely hazardous to have remained with that fleet of transports and flotilla in such a situation as to have left the West Scheldt open to you, whilst the army obtained sufficient possession of its banks to enable you to run up?—It did strike me that the fleet, and particularly the smaller vessels, would be exposed to great hazard at anchor at the mouth of the Scheldt if it came on to blow hard; and this consideration, as I have said before, induced us to go into the Roompot; and I believe our going into the Roompot at that time was highly approved of by lord Chatham, all

the naval officers, and most of the officers of the army.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Rear Admiral the Rt. Hon. LORD GARDNER, called in; and examined.

Did your lordship command a division of the English fleet in the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—I did.

At what time did you sail with that division of the fleet from the Downs?—I think on the 8th of July.

Did your lordship sail at an earlier period than it was originally intended you should sail with that division of the fleet?—I arrived at Deal on the 7th, I think; hoisted my flag on board the Blake on the 8th, and sailed by telegraphic order; I received no other order.

Had your lordship received no order from the admiralty before you quitted London?—No, none.

Under what instructions did your lordship quit London to join the fleet at Deal?—I quitted Yarmouth, not London.

Under what instructions did your lordship quit Yarmouth to join the fleet at Deal?—To proceed to the Downs and hoist my flag on such ship as sir R. Strachan should point out.

Had your lordship any communication with sir R. Strachan after your arrival at Deal, before you received the telegraphic order to sail?—I met sir R. Strachan on his road to town as I passed to Deal from Yarmouth; we had no communication.

Did your lordship receive any instructions from sir R. Strachan to assist commodore Owen with the boats of your division of the fleet for the purpose of landing the troops from commodore Owen's squadron upon Cadsand?—Yes, I did; a letter dated July 20th, from the Amethyst in the Downs. But I beg leave to state to the Committee, that a letter now before the House, dated Amethyst, July 24th, I never did receive; and as that letter appears to direct me to employ the sloops of war in scouring the beach, it is necessary for me to state, that I did receive a letter from sir R. Strachan, dated July 21st, which I beg permission to read.—[Letter read.]

I read from a copy, but I possess the originals, which are here. I received further directions from sir R. Strachan, dated Venerable, off West Capel, July 29th, 1809.

At what time did your lordship receive that letter?—I received it on the same



day towards the evening. Towards the evening, about an hour after the receipt of the above letter, I received another, dated Venerable, July 29.—[Letter read.]

The next letter I received is without date, enclosing one from commodore Owen, it was received by me on the 30th.—[Letter read.]

This letter is dated Clyde, in the Weiling's channel, Sluys south by west, 29th July 1809, addressed to the commander in chief by commodore Owen, and enclosed to me.—[Letter read.]

I have another letter, dated Venerable, July 31st, 1809.—[Letter read.]

I read that letter for the purpose of giving an extract from one of sir R. Strachan's letters to me, which I have not here, which I received August the 1st.

Did your lordship ever receive from commodore Owen any requisition to join his squadron in the Weilen?—Yes, I did.

Was that requisition by signal or by letter?—By letter; which I have, dated Clyde, off Cadsand, July 31st, 1809, received the evening of the same day.—[Letter read.]

Was that the first communication your lordship received from commodore Owen?—Yes, the first.

Did your lordship send the boats in consequence of that communication?—No, I did not; I considered that a co-operation was to take place by the line-of-battle ships passing into the Weilen. The distance of commodore Owen's squadron from me was 12 miles in a direct line, the approach circuitous by boats, owing to shoals, they wind as I shall read from the Blake's Log: "Fresh breezes and cloudy on the 31st, &c. also on the 1st." I mention this as a nautical reason. But I had not the smallest idea that the commander in chief intended I should send the boats of the squadron that distance, or part with the boats of the squadron at that time, expecting his appearance every moment, as also pilots to convoy the squadron to the Weilen channel, where we should have been enabled to have co-operated, and covered the operations under commodore Owen. I was also guided by the letter, an extract of which I have read to the Committee, wherein the commander in chief states that the landing at Cadsand might not be necessary at that time.

What was the distance of sir R. Strachan's ship the Venerable from your lordship, at that time?—Sir R. Strachan was moving in various situations, some-

times ashore, sometimes in the Venerable; the Venerable was in the Roompot, about 12 or 14 miles from me.

Why did not the squadron under your lordship's command join commodore Owen's squadron in the Weilen?—I never was ordered to join commodore Owen.

Is the Committee to understand from your lordship, that you never actually received any order to join commodore Owen in the Weilen, nor that any pilots came on board to conduct you into the Weilen?—I never received any orders whatever to join commodore Owen in the Weilen, nor did any pilots arrive to take my ships into the Weilen.

What answer did your lordship send to commodore Owen in consequence of his requisition for the boats of your squadron?—This letter is dated Blake, in the mouth of the Duerlow, Aug. 2d.—[Letter read.]

If all the boats which you could have sent from your squadron had been sent to join commodore Owen, what number of troops could they have put on shore?—I suppose the whole of the boats of the squadron I had the honour to command might have carried from 4 to 500 men; that is my opinion.

Was your lordship's squadron provided with any boats beyond the number which a squadron of that description usually carries to sea?—I understood some time after this period that the Centaur had two flat-bottomed boats on board, upon my having received directions to send her to cruise off the Texel; but at the time I received the requisitions from commodore Owen, no report had been made to me of those boats; the other ships of the squadron had only the usual number of boats.

Does your lordship now know the reason why the two flat-bottomed boats were put on board the Centaur?—The Centaur was equipped at Portsmouth originally to carry troops, but being wanted to reinforce the squadron under my command, she sailed in so great a hurry as not to have time to land the two flat-bottomed boats which was intended.

It was intended to have landed the two flat-bottomed boats from the Centaur?—Yes, at Portsmouth.

Has your lordship reason now to know that it was the intention, if there had been time, to have equipped your squadron with any number of boats beyond that usually carried by ships of that description?—I cannot state what was intended;

I suppose them intended to be effective ships of the line to act against the squadron of the enemy, and not to carry troops.

You do not know that there was any part of the intended equipment of your squadron defective in consequence of the haste with which it sailed?—No.

Your lordship states, that you did not receive sir R. Strachan's letter of the 24th of July at the time; did your lordship receive that letter at any subsequent time?—No, I never saw that letter until it appeared in the public papers.

Has your lordship any other papers you wish to produce?—I have various papers respecting Cadsand, which I do not think it material to produce; correspondence between the commander in chief and myself, and commodore Owen and myself till I was ordered to another station.

What is the general object and tendency of that correspondence?—Respecting the landing at Cadsand; that it was not thought necessary to land, &c.

Was it after the landing at Cadsand was given up?—It was stated to me, that it was not thought necessary to land at Cadsand.

State the date of the first letter of that correspondence?—It is a letter of Aug. 2d.

When did your lordship's squadron move from the situation it occupied twelve miles from commodore Owen, and twelve miles from sir Richard Strachan?—It was moved to the anchorage of Dykshook the moment I received orders to do so, and the pilots would take charge of the several ships. On the 10th of August we weighed to proceed with the squadron up the Duerloo, but owing to little winds were again obliged to anchor. On the 11th the squadron again weighed, and proceeded to the anchorage of Dykshook until the 14th, when they passed into the Scheldt and were engaged with the enemy's batteries.

Has your lordship copies of any correspondence relating to the transactions of your squadron with the commander in chief, and other officers, up to that period?—I have the whole of the correspondence, until the commander in chief joined and took the command of the squadron.

Will your lordship have the goodness to deliver in that correspondence?—[His lordship delivered it in.]

Have the goodness to state to the Committee your lordship's opinion, whether it would have been possible, considering the state of the wind and weather, to have sta-

tioned troops, or any part of the flotilla that was not otherwise employed, in such a way between Cadsand and Flushing previously to the 4th of August, as to have prevented reinforcements being thrown from Cadsand to Flushing?—I believe every part of the flotilla was employed, and that every exertion was made by commodore Owen with the means he had in his power to produce that effect; the wind and the weather were particularly unfavourable at that moment, and the vessels were otherwise employed. [His lordship withdrew.]

[The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 8.

*Luna, 19<sup>o</sup> die Februarii 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

Rear Admiral Sir RICHARD KEATS called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Were you consulted with by any of his Majesty's ministers previously to the sailing of the Expedition?—I was not consulted by any of his Majesty's ministers, but I had a conversation with lord Castlereagh at Deal, which I did not consider to be official. It was merely accidental.

Did that conversation regard the Expedition?—It did.

Have the goodness to state the substance of that conversation, and the date of it.—It first related to the state of the weather, which I represented as a very unfavourable batch of weather at that season of the year; the date I believe was the 24th of July, the day before I received my orders to proceed off Walcheren. His lordship mentioned to me then the object of the Expedition, and spoke of the measures to be pursued. I observed to his lordship, that if the fleet of the enemy at Antwerp was considered the great object of the Expedition, that I hoped we should not find ourselves involved in the siege of Flushing, or the operations in Walcheren, but that we should proceed on to the ultimate object without delay. On his lordship questioning me as to my knowledge of Walcheren, I informed him that I had no other than what I procured from the charts, and that I conceived from that knowledge, that the better way probably would be to go up the East Scheldt; his

lordship replied, that that had been in contemplation, but that it had been given up on a further consideration. I also represented, from the very bad batch of weather we had at that time, I much feared, unless a favourable change took place, that we ran great risk by carrying a fleet so very numerous upon that coast, for that certainly the weather was of a worse stamp than we might reasonably have expected at that season of the year. That was the substance of the conversation that I had with lord Castlereagh.

Can you state what further conversation took place, in consequence of your suggestion that no time should be lost in the attack of Walcheren and Flushing?—Lord Castlereagh rather heard what I had to say, than appeared desirous, I thought, of asking me particularly, nor do I remember if he made any observation upon that subject.

Do you know whether any plan was concerted for the attack of Antwerp?—No, I do not. I knew that Antwerp was the ultimate object of the Expedition, but as to the plan, I knew not of any, except that I understood part of the fleet were to have gone up the West Scheldt; but the mode of attack upon Antwerp I did not know, nor did I even know at that time the place at which it was intended to disembark the army. In the first question I was asked, whether I was consulted by his Majesty's ministers; I should state, I was sent for to town, and was informed by the first lord of the admiralty that I was to go upon the Expedition, but I was not consulted; I was only informed that I was to go, and what the object of the Expedition was, and the officers that were going, but I was asked no question.

Did you give the first lord of the admiralty any opinion respecting the probable issue?—No; I was asked no question, and consequently did not venture to give any opinion.

Were you well acquainted with the navigation of the Scheldt?—I never was in the Scheldt; the only knowledge I derived was from the charts with which we were supplied.

What were the instructions with which you sailed?—My instructions are in my pocket.

Are they the same as the printed paper?—I presume they are; I have not read the printed paper, I was directed to take under my command I think 33 men of war, and some few other vessels, in

which were embarked the reserve of the army, commanded by lieut. gen. sir John Hope, and to co-operate with him in proceeding up the East Scheldt, and in getting possession of South Beveland, with a view to take or destroy the sea batteries on that island, and also on the islands of Schowen and North Beveland, and to secure the command of the navigation of the East Scheldt. This was the foundation of my orders; but on the 25th, on information reaching the admiralty that the enemy's fleet from Antwerp had proceeded down the Scheldt, and were at anchor off Flushing, I was directed by sir R. Strachan, who received telegraphic orders from the admiralty to proceed immediately to sea off Walcheren, and to take the command of the squadron at that time under the command of rear admiral lord Gardner. On the 26th I was enabled to sail; on the 27th I joined lord Gardner, and took the command of the fleet. On the 29th in the morning, seeing a fleet which I understood to be part of the Expedition, I resigned the command of the squadron to my lord Gardner, and proceeded and joined sir R. Strachan in the Stone Deep about noon that day.

When did you arrive off Bathz?—I went by land from the anchorage I had taken up at Wemeldinge on the 3d of August, in the morning, Bathz being evacuated the night before.

At what time did the transports with the cavalry and artillery arrive at Bathz?—Transports were arriving at Bathz for several days, I think from the 20th to I believe the 25th of August, but without applying to other papers which I have not with me at this moment, I cannot exactly say on which of those days the cavalry and artillery arrived.

Can you state what was the cause of their arriving so late?—I believe naval impediments met with near Walcheren in the Slough passage, and at the mouth of the Scheldt. I had various letters from sir R. Strachan expressing an anxious desire to get the flotilla and the men of war up the West Scheldt; I had letters from him as early as the 31st of July strongly expressive of his desire and of his intention, and frigates were taken from me for the purpose of going up the West Scheldt, and all my flotilla; and indeed I was very apprehensive, having been contraried by the winds until the 1st of August, in getting to South Beveland, I was very uneasy lest the flotilla should have passed

up the West Scheldt before we should have an opportunity of landing upon South Beveland.

Do you imagine that if your advice had been attended to not to lose time at Flushing or Walcheren, but to proceed immediately to the ulterior objects, the army could have arrived at Bathz at an earlier period?—I do not consider that it was an advice given by me; I have already stated that I did not consider it an official conversation, it was rather an observation, and perhaps improperly in some degree urged or mentioned by me, as my opinion or advice really was not asked.

Had such been the plan, do you think the armament could have arrived at Bathz at an earlier period?—It met with difficulties, and difficulties which in their consequences were I thought very serious the first day. Sir R. Strachan had intended to have equipped his flotilla for the Western Scheldt, in the West Putt, contiguous to the entrance of the West Scheldt, but the weather necessitated him to seek shelter for it, and the only place according to the state of wind and weather at that time that afforded a shelter was in the Roompot, the other side of the island. This I always considered as a very serious misfortune, but unavoidable on account of the state of the weather, for the equipment of the flotilla was always understood to be a primary point to any operations, and a very material one.

What was the state of the flotilla?—The flotilla consisted of between 80 and 90 gun-boats; they were to be manned, provisioned, and to receive their guns, water, ammunition and other ordnance stores, and as the enemy were supposed to have a very strong flotilla to oppose our entrance up either of the Scheldts, it became the first naval measure absolutely requisite.

Is the Committee to understand this flotilla was to be equipped after its arrival in the Scheldt?—After its arrival in the Scheldt; it would have been unsafe to have attempted bringing them in with their guns in, they were to be manned from the men of war.

What time did that equipment require?—It was my first object on my arrival in the Roompot, on the 29th. My own flotilla, consisting of 26 sail, were ready the next day, but I cannot state how many of the remaining part of the flotilla were ready that day, some delay arose from one

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of the ships having the guns in not having arrived in sufficient time.

Do you know whether any difficulty was experienced from the want of sufficient pilots by any part of the fleet?—From the experience I have had, I think myself justified in saying, that of all classes of men in society, or at least of men attached to the navy, pilots are the least to be trusted to, and I should not have thought of taking a fleet up either of the Scheldts upon the most positive assurances of pilots without having examined the navigation, and satisfied myself; my experience of pilots makes that caution necessary.

How long do you think it would require to have made that examination of the navigation as far as Santvliet?—In examining the navigation, very great advantage would have been derived from the survey with which we were supplied by the admiralty, a very excellent survey; the time that it would have taken to have examined the navigation must have depended greatly upon the weather; under favourable circumstances, being as we were in possession of South Beveland on the 1st of August, I should suppose a very few days would have been requisite, for we were very well supplied with the means, small vessels, buoy-boats, masters, attendants, and people accustomed to sound and buoy navigation; it would be very unjust not to say that government had very abundantly supplied us, in my opinion, with the requisite means.

Were you acquainted with the state of Lillo, and the boom across the river at that place?—I had the advantage only of seeing Lillo within a few miles from the ship in which my flag was hoisted, and on my approaching nearer it in smaller vessels, I was never nearer I presume than three miles and a half or four miles; the boom was early thrown across, I am not certain of the day, for I am not sure that we perceived it immediately, but I think it must have been thrown across the 14th of August.

Do you mean that it was not thrown across the river earlier than the 14th of August?—Their flotilla retired to Lillo on the 11th, on the arrival of our flotilla, and, I think, on the 13th went above the boom. I think on the 13th or the 14th the boom was thrown across, when their flotilla was all above the boom.

It was then that the boom was closed; probably it had been constructed some (S)

time before?—I presume it is always in construction ready to be thrown across.

Were you consulted with respect to the possibility of forcing the passage?—I was present at a conversation on the subject of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik with my lord Chatham, sir R. Strachan, and several general Officers, on the 26th of August.

State what took place in that conversation?—It respected the advance of the army, and the measures to be taken for getting possession of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, but the navigation being open to where the river narrows, a little below Doel, it was considered by sir R. Strachan that no further measures could be taken in prosecution of the ultimate object but in conjunction with the army.

Was it your opinion that the boom could have been forced?—If the boom could have been forced I see no possible good that could have resulted from it, except the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik could have been taken possession of.

Supposing it possible for the shipping to have proceeded up the Scheldt towards Antwerp, in case the army were compelled to retreat, would it have been possible for the large vessels to have effected their retreat except with a very favourable wind?—I hold it impossible for the fleet to have passed up the Scheldt unaccompanied by the army. Their return in the event of the army retreating, in that narrow navigation, must have been greatly dependent upon the winds; for I believe the channel is in some places so narrow, that it would have been impracticable to have tided it down.

Then there would have been danger that the fleet in its retreat, would not have kept pace with the retreat of the army?—I think, with strong westerly winds, the fleet might not have been able to have got down but with a change of wind.

Is it your opinion that the fleet could not have proceeded up to Antwerp, unless the army were in possession both of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik?—It is.

Supposing the army in possession of those forts, could the fleet have proceeded and returned with safety if the French were in possession of one bank of the river between the forts and Antwerp?—I think there would have been considerable risk, but with such an object in view, I am of opinion sir R. Strachan would have attempted it.

Considering the extent of the armament and the number of transports, is it not probable that a considerable space of time would have elapsed from the period of the fleet sailing from Deal, till the time when the troops could have been all disembarked at Santvliet?—It must have been dependent upon weather; one of those measures that is subject to a great chance.

Is not the chance of delay considerably increased by the narrowness, the winding, and the intricacy of the navigation?—Certainly; but the channels once buoyed, with the strength of tide there is in the Scheldt, the masters of transports being generally much accustomed to tide up and down rivers, I think the difficulties would have been got over.

Would it not have occasioned some delay to buoy those channels?—It might under favourable circumstances of weather; I think two days, with the advantages which I have before enumerated, which we possessed.

Would there not have been considerable difficulty in carrying so large an armament up the Scheldt with several winds?—It would have been more difficult with foul than with fair winds, and certainly considerable difficulties must have been expected, and would have been experienced in moving so large a fleet up; but they would have been surmounted, our means being great.

Is it by the East or West Scheldt, you imagine the armament could have proceeded with the greatest expedition, supposing Santvliet and Antwerp their objects?—I was of opinion, judging from the charts only before I sailed from England, that it would have been more advantageous to have moved the Expedition up the Eastern than the Western Scheldt, but the knowledge I now possess inclines me to give the preference to the Western Scheldt.

From the knowledge you have of the navigation of the Western Scheldt, do you think it probable that so large an armament could be conveyed up to the landing place, and from thence proceed by sea and by land up to Antwerp, without giving the enemy a very considerable time for preparation?—I conceive under favourable circumstances of weather, the armament having arrived on the 29th of July, that it is possible it might have been at Santvliet in three days.

Do you include buoying the channel?—I include buoying the channel.

Do you include taking possession of the batteries either of Walcheren or Cadsand?—The batteries of South Beveland were in our possession, but for a fleet of transports to have gone up the Western Scheldt, I conceive the possession of Flushing or Cadsand would have been requisite; but I understood it to be the original intention that all the troops intended to proceed up the West Scheldt were to be embarked in men of war, which I conceived, being in possession as we were of South Beveland, might have passed into the Western Scheldt, notwithstanding Cadsand and Flushing were both in possession of the enemy. In reference to a former question I would beg to have it understood, that in the event of going up the Scheldt with a fleet of transports, the answer I gave was supposing Cadsand or Flushing to be in our possession, I would not attempt to take a fleet of transports up with Cadsand and Flushing in the possession of the enemy, but with troops which I understood were to be in men of war, I do not consider Cadsand or Flushing at all material.

In point of fact, were the troops which were to land at Santvliet conveyed in men of war?—The arrangement I believe was made to take them all in men of war, but by some mistake at the time of embarkation some troops intended to have gone in men of war for the Western Scheldt were embarked in transports.

At all events, must not the ordnance, the mortars, and the artillery horses have been conveyed in transports?—I believe that provision was made for their being conveyed in transports.

Then it would have been necessary for an army to have proceeded with a view to besiege Antwerp with all that was necessary for that siege to have been in possession either of Flushing or of Cadsand?—Horses might have been landed on South Beveland and marched to the other end of the island, and the number of transports in which the artillery and mortars would have been embarked, I should conceive might have been towed by the men of war, or taken with the men of war.

Would not these operations have been considerably retarded if the fort of Bathz had been defended as it might have been?—They would have been retarded; I presume Bathz was a work that the army would have got into in the course of a few days although it had been defended.

Did you understand that Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were capable of considerable defence?—I understood such to be the opinion of military officers; on the 26th of August, at Bathz; I believe they were works that could not have been reduced by the navy.

Was it not understood that they might have been defended for a considerable number of days?—I believe certainly it was, but the enemy at that time had had abundance of time to provide modes of defence that possibly they did not possess on our first arrival.

What modes of defence do you allude to, that came within your knowledge?—Strongly garrisoning them; probably mounting guns that might not have been mounted, for we observed them busy at work at an old fort near Lillo, which they put into a state of defence; and they opened a mortar battery near Doel whilst we lay off it.

On what day did you observe this battery constructed?—They were constructing a battery at fort Hendrick, which is the first I allude to, I think from the 14th of August to the 26th or 27th, when most of the guns were mounted; and the mortar battery near Doel was opened I think on the 28th or 29th.

Had you any reason to believe that the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were not in a state of defence when the armament sailed from England?—I incline to the opinion that there were few troops in the country on our first arrival: but I do not know that those forts were not perfectly garrisoned.

Have you any reason to think that the fortifications of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were not in a state of defence, and that they were not provided with a sufficient number of guns at the time of the sailing of the Expedition?—No, I have not; I meant to allude to troops which I was of opinion the country was almost destitute of at the time of our first arrival.

Then you have no reason to think that the forts were not in a perfect state of defence with respect to their works at the time of your first arrival?—No, certainly not.

From the extent of the works of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, do they require many men to garrison them?—I do not know the extent of their works, but I should apprehend they must require some hundred men at least to garrison them.

Supposing there were some hundred

men to garrison those forts, would it not have been impossible, until those forts had been reduced by siege, for the fleet to have co-operated in any attack upon Antwerp?—The fleet could not have co-operated in an attack upon Antwerp above Lillo and Liefkenshoeik until they were reduced.

Had you any knowledge of the state of the fortifications of Antwerp at the time you arrived at South Beveland?—I had not.

Had you any knowledge of the amount of troops in Antwerp upon the 5th of August?—No, there were various reports as to the state of Antwerp; some stating Antwerp to be destitute; others the reverse.

What part of the service did you conduct yourself?—My original orders directed me to proceed up the East Scheldt, with the reserve of the army, to get possession of South Beveland, and the islands of Schowen and North Beveland, and to secure the navigation of the Eastern Scheldt; I was afterwards ordered by sir R. Strachan to take upon me the command in both Scheldts, and on the 14th I shifted my flag from the East to the West Scheldt.

In the execution of the orders which you received, how soon did you arrive with the naval force under your command at South Beveland?—I landed the principal part of the reserve of the army, with lieut. gen. sir John Hope, on the 1st of August, but at that time not well understanding the navigation, sloops of war only were taken up with me, but we afterwards moved up the frigates and even ships of the line.

At what period did the frigates and ships of the line arrive?—I cannot at present state the days, but I could have earlier moved them up if I had found it requisite.

Can you state within a day or two of the time?—On the 6th of August I ordered some frigates up, and on the 8th the *Superb*, a ship of the line; in the command I had in the Eastern Scheldt, I kept ships off Ziricksee with a view to cover that island (as we found it very useful to draw the supplies) to keep the inhabitants in order to overawe them, and to keep the enemy from it, and my ships were frequently very variously stationed in the Eastern Scheldt, conformably to circumstances, I could have ordered every thing up if it had appeared necessary.

On the 6th you ordered some frigates to be moved up, and on the 8th a ship of the line, but you say you could have ordered them up sooner if necessary; what circumstance induced you to think it was not necessary to move them up sooner?—According to the command with which I was left, I stationed my ships as I thought best calculated under all circumstances. I found it requisite to station some ships in the Keetan; some I kept off North Beveland. My object for stationing ships in the Keetan was to cover the islands of Duiveland and Schowen; and my object in keeping ships off Coltesplaat in North Beveland, was to protect the few transports which I had ordered there; and also conceiving that the final embarkation, whenever it took place, would be from Coltesplaat in North Beveland.

You thought the ships were more usefully employed in other services?—Precisely so.

When did all the ships arrive, having those things that were necessary for the equipment and acting of the army of reserve?—I believe on the 1st of August there was a victualler, and I believe a ship with some horses absent. I think those were the only ships that were at that time absent, it appeared to be by mistake.

When did the ships having the heavy artillery, and having the horses for the draft of the artillery, and when the ships having cavalry on board, arrive?—There was one of the cavalry-ships got on shore near Ziricksee, and the horses were carried up in small vessels; but I believe all the horses belonging to the reserve, and all the artillery of the reserve required to be landed, were, if I mistake not, landed on the 1st, 2d, or 3d of August.

When did the battering train destined for the siege of Antwerp arrive?—It went up the Western Scheldt, and must have arrived between the 20th and 24th of August.

Was there any unnecessary delay in their arrival; so far as you know, could they by proper management have arrived sooner?—I know of no unnecessary delay. Masters of transports left to themselves, if they are without men of war, we know are very idle.

Were those transports left entirely to themselves, and were they idle?—I do not know; I have no knowledge of movements of the transports, or indeed the men of war at the entrance of the Western Scheldt.

Do you recollect having shifted your flag on the 14th of August, to the Camilla, in the West Scheldt?—Perfectly.

Do you recollect what was the state of the flotilla which was with you at that time?—One 20 gun ship, 10 sloops, 7 gun brigs, one rocket ship, 3 divisions of gun boats, and 30 flat boats armed with cannonades.

Did you consider yourself at that time in a state to proceed to the ulterior objects of the Expedition, if the army had been ready to co-operate with you?—No, I did not consider that the naval force was sufficient at that time to have justified me, had the army been ready, to have entered into any operations.

For what purpose did you write to lord Rosslyn on the 17th of August?—In consequence of my having received orders from my commander in chief to form any plan, and to act with my lord Rosslyn for the accomplishment of the ulterior object; namely, the destruction of the fleet at Antwerp.

Did you consider the force then under your command sufficient to have induced you to proceed, if the army had been ready to co-operate?—I would have gone, but I knew at the time I wrote to my lord Rosslyn that the army was not ready; I had every reason to believe they were not; I had seen my lord Rosslyn on the 15th, and I was in expectation every tide of men of war, ships of the line, and frigates, and that I must have had a sufficient naval force before any plan could have been formed to act upon.

Do you mean to be understood, that if the army had at that time been ready to co-operate with you, you had not a sufficient naval force?—No; I think it would have been my duty to have gone on if the army had been ready.

Do you consider that you had at that time a sufficient force to co-operate with the army, if it had been ready?—I had not; I had no other flat boats than what I brought with me from the Eastern Scheldt, the flat boats from the Western Scheldt had not arrived; I could have transported at that time but a comparatively small body of men; if the question is in allusion to naval force in the situation of the enemy at Antwerp, and with their boom across, with myself in possession of a very formidable flotilla and 18 frigates or sloops, I should have considered it my duty to have gone on, knowing also that a much more formidable naval force was on its passage to me.

When did you receive any reinforcements?—I was daily receiving reinforcements. On the next day, the 18th, one ship of the line, one 50, near 12 frigates, one 20 gun ship, 11 sloops, 4 bombs, 8 gun brigs, and 5 divisions of gun boats.

Did you on that day or the next, send sir H. Popham to sir R. Strachan?—Yes, I believe it was the 18th.

What was your object in sending sir H. Popham to sir R. Strachan?—My object in sending sir H. Popham to sir Richard Strachan, was to beg that flat boats might be hastened, and expressing my wish that the commanders in chief of both services would accelerate, by every means in their power, whatever measures were to be undertaken.

When you were informed by the admiralty that you were to take a part in this Expedition, what was stated to you by the first lord of the admiralty to be the object of the Expedition?—The taking of Flushing, and the destruction of the enemy's fleet at Antwerp, were pointed out to me as the great objects for which the Expedition was formed.

Did you express any hope to the first lord of the admiralty, that you should not be incumbered with the siege of Flushing or the occupation of Walcheren?—No, I did not, I was not consulted, no opinion was asked of me, as I have before observed.

When you expressed to lord Castlereagh your hope that the Expedition would not be incumbered with the siege of Flushing or the occupation of Walcheren, what observation did lord Castlereagh make to you?—I think my lord Castlereagh (but I am not sure) said, that it was thought Walcheren could not be passed without being taken possession of.

Are not westerly winds the most prevalent winds in the Scheldt during the time when the Expedition was in that river?—At that season of the year I think westerly winds generally prevail, and I think they prevailed in the Scheldt.

When you were asked, on a former part of your examination, your opinion as to the practicability of breaking the boom, you said that even had the boom been broken, you did not think the ships could pass up without the occupation of the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik; do you think that considering the bend of the river, and the oblique position of the boom, it was likely that your ships could have had head-way sufficient to have broken the boom?—I think it very doubtful.



ful, but the preferable way perhaps of breaking the boom would have been by approaching the gun boats, I think it would have been difficult for the ships to have broken the boom, and indeed extremely difficult in every way, without having possession of those forts.

Would not the vessels, whatever they had been, which had attempted to break the boom and failed, have had their heads thrown up under the guns of Liefkenshoek, and would they not have been consequently raked by that fortress?—Without more minutely knowing where the ends of the boom were fixed relatively with the forts, I cannot precisely answer for the situation in which they might have been thrown; certainly their situation would have been very awkward.

What was the naval force which the enemy had immediately behind the boom?—There were as many small vessels as the navigation would permit mooring there, and I believe at one time there were 40 of different sizes, mostly brigs, besides gun boats.

Had the defences of the boom been forced, were there not other forts upon the Scheldt which our ships must have passed before they could have reached Antwerp?—There is one marked in the chart, I do not know that they had constructed a new one.

In point of fact, opposite that one marked in the chart, were there not two sail of the line stationed to protect the reach of the river leading to that fort?—There were 3 frigates, but I think on the 24th there was no ship of the line below Antwerp; there were two line of battle ships, there some time which moved up to Antwerp, I cannot recollect the precise day.

When, in the conversation with the secretary of state, you discouraged any operations against Flushing, state what your reasons were for thinking any measure of that sort improper or inexpedient?—An apprehension that a delay injurious to the ultimate objects of the Expedition might ensue.

Did you think that the necessary delays attending that operation would have been such as to preclude a hope of success in the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I always considered that, except we were favoured by circumstances in getting the army early on shore, the enemy would increase in such a proportion as to render our ultimate success doubtful. In fact it

was one of those Expeditions, as I thought, which depended very much upon celerity.

If your proposition of proceeding by the East Scheldt had been adopted, where did you suppose the army ought to have landed, and by what course to have proceeded in its operations against Antwerp?—At that time I had no other knowledge than what I derived from charts, and it appeared to me, judging from them, that by landing on Tolen land; and going between Bergen-op-Zoom and Steenberghe, was a ready way to Antwerp; but a more correct knowledge of that country since has satisfied me, that the military objections to that course were greater than I was aware of, and therefore we must have gone by South Beveland.

When you lay off Batz, was a ford discovered across the Bergen-op-Zoom channel?—A ford was early discovered. I early learnt from sir J. Hope, that the passage was fordable in some parts from South Beveland to the opposite land.

Did you examine that ford yourself, or order it to be examined?—I did.

For how many hours, at any period of the tide, was it practicable for infantry?—I believe for one hour.

What was the width of that ford?—There was an old part which would have taken, I believe, about twelve or fourteen men abreast, which appeared to have something hard at bottom, as if stones had been thrown down. I believe it was an ancient pass. At the other parts that were fordable it was muddy, and had holes, and that was of considerable extent; but what the difficulties to be met with on the Bergen-op-Zoom side, in going from that ford to the dyke might be, I am not informed. I mention that circumstance, because on the Beveland side there were difficulties in getting upon the land when a person came close to it, although he met with no great difficulty in coming over the stream; there were watercourses in the land which would have very much impeded, and perhaps stopped an army entirely; so that I think the only part which could have been depended upon, was that fordable part which would take about 14 men abreast. If the impediments were as great on the opposite side as on Beveland, the army would have found themselves deceived, but I do not know whether there were those difficulties; we could never ascertain.

You have stated, that on the 17th of

August when you wrote to lord Rosslyn to propose a co-operation with the army, you knew the army was not ready to co-operate; upon what facts was your knowledge founded?—I had seen my lord Rosslyn on the 15th, and I believe general Hope or my lord Rosslyn on the 16th; I had no reason to believe they had orders to co-operate with me, and I had not observed any movements or measures that allowed me to believe the troops were ready to proceed over; in fact, I had observed no preparation.

Had, at that period, any part of the transports with the cavalry, the ordnance or the stores of the army, arrived at Bathz?—Not any, they did not arrive for several days afterwards; I think none of the transports before the 19th or 20th.

When did you first open a communication between the East and West Scheldt, or when did you first send boats round to Bathz?—I ordered two boats on the 3d of August.

How long were they going round from your advanced ships?—They both got on shore, being unacquainted with the navigation, and were delayed, and the enemy's flotilla being at that time off Bathz, I believe made their entrance to Bathz difficult, and retarded them; I do not recollect the exact time they took to go round.

Do you recollect when they were enabled to go round without any prevention from the enemy's flotilla?—Yes.

Have the goodness to state it to the Committee?—The day on which the flotilla of Bergen-op-Zoom went into that port, which was I believe the 15th of August.

When did your first boats get round to Bathz?—I sent them on the 3d, they arrived I believe on the 4th.

You frequently sent them after that?—Yes, boats were sent two or three times afterwards between that and the 11th.

[The witness was directed to withdraw. —The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 9.

*Martis, 20<sup>e</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

Lieut. Gen. the Rt. hon. the Marquis of  
HUNTLEY, examined by the Com-  
mittee.

Has your lordship brought with you the instructions you received previously to sailing on the late Expedition?—I have.

Will you have the goodness to deliver them in.—[The Marquis of Huntley delivered in his Instructions, dated Ramsgate, 25th July 1809; which were read.]

“(Secret.) Ramsgate, 25th July 1809.

“My lord; The possession of the batteries established by the enemy on the island of Cadsand being judged essential to the free navigation of the entrance of the West Scheldt, I have the honour to acquaint you, by lord Chatham's directions, that this service is to be executed by such proportion of the 2d division of the army under your lordship's commands as you may judge on a personal view of these defences, and in conjunction with the opinion of commodore Owen, who commands a division of the fleet to co-operate with you in this service, adequate to the object.

“It would appear that 2,000 men, with three light 6-pounders, one 5½ inch howitzer and the rifle-men attached to the 2d division, will be a sufficient force, and lord Chatham is of opinion, that the operation may be, in the first instance, entrusted to brigadier gen. Montresor, giving him the assistance of capt. Paisley, lieutenants Longley and Power of the royal engineers, who are attached to your lordship's division; as it will be necessary to strengthen the position on Cadsand by field works, to enable a small corps to maintain it for the protection of the Weiling channel and the anchorage within the Bresken's point, until Flushing falls, and another entrance into the Scheldt insured.

“The accompanying copy of the report of a reconnaissance made by capt. Paisley, of the enemy's defences on Cadsand, will give your lordship the best information that has been obtained of the nature of them, and of the most eligible point of landing, which is represented to be Wielpen signal post; the battery at this point being secured, and those to the eastward and westward of it in possession, the best position that the nature of the ground will admit of to be taken up, a small corps should be detached to occupy Cassandria, and a chain of advanced posts established along the channel, which is a branch of the Sluys Gaat, and extends eastward to the Scheldt. This line being preserved, and the Sluys Gaat well watched by the gun-boats of commodore Owen's division, it appears that the posi-

tion on Cadsand will be secure, and which, as before observed, must be maintained as long as Flushing holds out.

"In order to facilitate the operations against Walcheren, a brigade of your lordship's division is to be held in readiness to embark on flat and other boats, to threaten the Nolle battery to the westward of Flushing, and to be ready to make a landing to intercept the enemy that may endeavour to retreat by the coast into Flushing, upon our troops having made a landing good in Zoutland Bay, or to the northward at Domburg. This operation will be directed by signal, or by lord Chatham's special order.

"I transmit for your lordship's private information a copy of rear admiral sir R. Strachan's instructions to commodore Owen, and lord Chatham is assured that the joint service will be conducted by your lordship and the commodore with the utmost cordiality and effect.

"Your lordship will be pleased to report, for lord Chatham's information, the progress made by the troops to be landed on Cadsand, and all extraordinary circumstances that occur.

"I have only now to acquaint your lordship, that a brigade of five light 6 pounders and one 5½-inch howitzer, commanded by capt. Brome of the royal artillery, and embarked on board the Cumberland ordnance transport, is attached to the 2d division of the army under your lordship's command; and that a detachment of the royal staff corps will also be added to it.

"I enclose a small portable map of Cadsand; and have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient humble servant, ROBT. BROWNRIGG, Q. M. G."

Did your lordship receive any other instructions, either written or verbal, at that time or subsequently?—Not that I recollect.

Was your lordship given to understand that you were to have the means of disembarking 2,000 men at one trip, and by whom?—I had a conversation with commodore Owen on the 24th morning at Deal, in which he stated he could land only 600 men: I reported that to gen. Brownrigg on his return from Deal in the evening, and he said the last conversation he had with the admiral was, that there would be ample means for landing a great part of my division; the following morning I received the instructions which have just been read. Lord Chatham and

gen. Brownrigg then went to Deal, I embarked from Ramsgate on the 27th, with the idea that 2,000 of the division would be landed at once, and I stated that to commodore Owen, who informed me that he had received no instructions whatever upon that subject.

What gave rise to your lordship's idea that you would have the means of disembarking 2,000 men at one time?—Being informed that ample means were furnished for the disembarkation of my division I did not consider 2,000 men a very great proportion to be landed at once.

From whom did your lordship receive that information?—I mentioned that the admiral had stated that ample means would be provided, and that gen. Brownrigg had informed me of that.

Is the Committee to understand that the idea that 2,000 men could be disembarked at once was merely your lordship's conclusion, and not the result of any specific assurance?—I considered no assurance whatever to be given, and I also considered it perfectly in my discretion to land any number of men I thought proper.

When commodore Owen informed your lordship on the 27th that no more than 600 men could be disembarked at one time, what took place on that conversation?—I said I wished to communicate the circumstance to the commander in chief; the next morning commodore Owen gave me a brig at four o'clock in the morning to go to the Venerable; when I came near the Venerable she was getting under way; I hailed the Venerable, and sir Home Popham, I think, answered me that he could not bring to, that we were to follow her through the Narrows; we followed her, the weather got very hazy, and commodore Owen made a signal to recall the brig.

Has your lordship any objection to state the circumstances which prevented the disembarkation on Cadsand taking place?—The want of having sufficient boats.

On what day was it first proposed to land on Cadsand?—The 29th, the day that we came to anchor, and seeing a chain of sentries along the sand hills where we did come to anchor; finding there was a fast sailing cutter going to head quarters, I wrote to gen. Brownrigg, stating that there were means only for landing six hundred men, and I received an answer from him, dated the 30th in the morning, to say that the boats of lord Gardner's squadron were to come to our assistance.

On the 29th the debarkation did not take place, because you thought it inexpedient to land in so small a division?—We could not land on the 29th in consequence of the weather. On the 30th I objected to landing six hundred men; at the same time Commodore Owen on no one occasion made any difficulty; he was ready on every occasion to have done any thing that I proposed.

Your lordship, as general of that division, did not conceive it safe or prudent to land so small a detachment in the face of the enemy that appeared on Cadsand?—I certainly did not.

Had your lordship then, or at a subsequent time, any accurate information of the amount of the enemy's force?—No, I had not.

Was there any preparation to land on a day subsequent to the 30th?—We were always prepared. On the 31st we moved higher up, thinking that we saw the boats coming to our assistance from lord Gardner's fleet, and had prepared to run the transports on shore at half tide, as I was very anxious to get on shore if possible.

Will your lordship state what instructions you received, or what were your operations subsequent to the 31st?—Commodore Owen received orders to send us round to the Roompot; previous to that, I believe Commodore Owen received a letter, stating that sir R. Strachan was coming to take us up past Flushing.

Will your lordship proceed to state what were the instructions you subsequently received, and the operations of the division under your command?—I received no order myself, the order came to Commodore Owen to send us round to the Roompot; the men on board his frigate were sent on board other frigates which went round, and my staff and myself were put on board a small excise cutter.

Where did your lordship proceed afterwards with your division?—To South Beveland.

Does your lordship recollect any conversation that passed between yourself and gen. Montresor on board the ship of Commodore Owen, on the subject of debarkation on Cadsand?—I recollect nothing but gen. Montresor coming on board.

What were the orders your lordship gave to gen. Montresor?—I merely shewed him those instructions which were just now read.

Was there any conversation with gen.  
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Montresor about the number of men to be disembarked at a time, or about the propriety of attempting a landing under existing circumstances?—I told gen. Montresor that I certainly should not attempt a landing with six or seven hundred men, having seen the very strong picquets of the enemy, which led me to believe there must have been a very considerable force in the rear.

Was there any report from which your lordship could form an estimate of the probable force of the enemy at that period?—I did not know at that time; I saw them in considerable numbers, and I understood that three thousand men had been thrown from the island of Cadsand into Flushing; and also that the report of deserters had said there were at one time from six to seven thousand men there.

Had your lordship any other opportunity of receiving intelligence at any subsequent time, upon which you could depend, of the state of the enemy's preparations and of their force on Cadsand?—I can only answer that as I did before, that I understood they had got three thousand men over to Flushing, and that deserters had said there were from six to seven thousand men in the island at one time. I saw two distinct bodies, amounting together to eighteen hundred men at one time, in two different uniforms.

Did your lordship understand that the two thousand men sent over to Flushing were included in the number of six or seven thousand men referred to?—I did.

At what time did your lordship receive that information?—I think that was on the 6th of August.

From the mode and the quarter from which the communication was made to your lordship, did you conceive it was entitled to implicit credit?—I certainly did.

At what time did your lordship leave the Weilin passage, and when did you land on South Beveland?—I think it was on the 7th I left the Weilin passage, and landed on the 9th on South Beveland.

Subsequent to the intelligence to which your lordship has alluded, did you at any other time receive any intelligence respecting the general state of the enemy's preparations in the neighbourhood of the Scheldt?—No, I do not.

When your lordship was on South Beveland, did you receive any information with respect to the state of the force or preparation at Antwerp?—No, I did not; I was not at the advanced post.

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In consequence of not landing at Cadsand, did your lordship make any report to lord Chatham?—I did.

Has your lordship got a copy of it?—I have not got it here, I understand my report was given in to the House.

Had your lordship any opportunity of receiving any information respecting the state of fort Lillo or the inundation in the neighbourhood?—No, I was at a considerable distance.

Had your lordship at any time made preparation and ordered provisions to be cooked for the troops on board commodore Owen's squadron, to be landed on any particular morning?—They had always provisions cooked ready to land.

Was there any particular day or morning on which your lordship had intended that the troops should be landed?—I should have landed the first day if there had been sufficient boats.

Was it the intention of your lordship on any day after the 29th to have landed your men on Cadsand, with the number of boats which Commodore Owen could supply?—The transports on the 31st, as I stated before, were intended to have been run on shore at half tide, thinking the boats of lord Gardner's fleet were coming to us, but when I found that no more men could be landed than were at first proposed, I then objected to it, not having it in my power to send one battalion on shore at a time.

There was no intention on the part of your lordship to have landed any troops on the 30th?—Not unless we had the boats.

Did your lordship send for gen. Montresor on board the Clyde on the morning of the 30th?—I did.

Did your lordship then communicate to gen. Montresor the instructions you had received?—I communicated to him those instructions that were read.

Does your lordship recollect having communicated to gen. Montresor any verbal instruction which you had received from gen. Brownrigg at Ramsgate?—I said to gen. Montresor that I thought, from the report with regard to the boats, I should be able to land two thousand men at once.

To what report does your lordship allude?—The admiral having said there would be ample means for my division being landed.

What induced your lordship to couple the expression of ample means, with the

precise number of two thousand men to go at one time?—My instructions being that the service was to be performed in the first instance with two thousand men.

Does your lordship recollect general Montresor's having made any remonstrance, or suggested any thing on the communication your lordship made to him of your instructions about the inexpediency of landing fewer than 2,000 men at one trip?—I do not; I believe that general Montresor was ready to land with any number.

On what day did your lordship see the 1,800 men in two divisions on Cadsand?—On the 31st, morning.

Does your lordship know any thing of the strength of Antwerp?—I was in Antwerp in 1793, as a captain in the guards, but I know nothing of it since.

Does your lordship know whether at that time it was surrounded by a deep and a wet ditch?—I think there is a wet ditch.

Does your lordship think a place surrounded with a deep and wet ditch could be taken by a *coup de main*?—I certainly do not think Antwerp could be taken by a *coup de main*.

Does your lordship think it would have been imprudent to have hazarded landing on Cadsand with less than 2,000 men?—I certainly do.

When did commodore Owen shew your lordship his arrangement for disembarking the division under your orders?—The 24th.

Did commodore Owen distinctly state to your lordship the number of men he could land at one trip with the boats under his command?—I have already stated, commodore Owen said in the first conversation I had with him, he could land only 600 at one trip.

Did your lordship then state to commodore Owen, that you thought that an insufficient number to attempt a landing on Cadsand with?—I did.

Did commodore Owen make any representation to your lordship on that observation?—I think that commodore Owen said, that probably we should have the assistance of lord Gardner's boats.

Did your lordship express any wish to commodore Owen, that he should represent to sir R. Strachan, previously to sir R. Strachan's quitting the Downs, that he did not think he was furnished with a sufficient number of boats to effect a landing upon the island of Cadsand?—I do not

recollect that I did, but that I reported the circumstances to general Brownrigg.

What was the strength of your lordship's division?—5,000 men.

In the event of your lordship having landed the whole of your division on Cadsand, do you know enough of the locality of Cadsand to say, whether your lordship could have taken up a strong defensive position in the event of its being necessary?—I find some difficulty in answering that question; but a great deal would have been done with my division, because a finer one I believe never left this country.

Does your lordship think that your division, consisting of 5,000 men, would have enabled you to defend Cadsand from any reinforcements, in the event of the enemy wishing to push assistance from the main into the island?—That would depend upon the strength of the enemy.

From the local situation of the channel between the main and the island, could your lordship have taken up such positions, as that in the event of the enemy coming down in considerable force, you could have prevented his passage into the island?—Not if he had been in considerable force.

Has your lordship any reason to doubt that the enemy could have appeared in considerable force relatively to the strength of your lordship's division, in the island of Cadsand, from information your lordship has collected since or had before?—I should suppose they might have brought a very large force.

Then your lordship is not able to say whether, in the event of that large force having appeared against you in the island of Cadsand, that island would have enabled you to take up a strong defensive position, which you could have retained till you obtained reinforcements from the main body of the army?—I should suppose not.

Your lordship has already mentioned you had no particular information as to the situation of the force at Antwerp?—No.

Did commodore Owen state to your lordship what additional number of troops the boats of lord Gardner's squadron, if they had arrived, would have enabled you to disembark?—I think commodore Owen did not exactly know how many ships were with lord Gardner.

What did your lordship conceive to be the principal object of the landing of our troops at Cadsand, to take a position at

Cadsand, or merely to destroy the enemy's batteries to prevent their molesting our troops in passing?—To do all the mischief possible.

What information had your lordship on the 30th or 31st, when you proposed to land respecting the force the enemy had at Cadsand?—I saw the enemy.

Was not captain Paisley, of the engineers, with your lordship's detachment?—He was.

Did your lordship consult capt. Paisley about the practicability of landing 600 men?—Capt. Paisley was with me, and I had it in my power to put any questions to him I thought proper.

Supposing your lordship had possessed Cadsand with your division according to your instructions, and supposing also that a superior French force had forced a passage into that island, were there any positions which could have covered the re-embarkation of your lordship's corps?—I should think not.

Does your lordship recollect at what hour on the 30th you first perceived any French force on the island of Cadsand?—I saw several sentries along the ridges of the hills on Cadsand on the 29th, evening; on the 30th I saw all the batteries mounted, and a piquet of 300 going to relieve a piquet.

Was your lordship instructed beyond the possession of Cadsand, to advance by the left bank of the Scheldt, or to re-embark your troops?—I received no instructions on that head.

Did your lordship receive any instructions beyond taking up a defensive position on the island of Cadsand?—I received no further instructions than what have been read here.

Was your lordship furnished by government with any description of the nature of the channel that separated Cadsand from the main?—I was furnished with a map of Cadsand by general Brownrigg. [His Lordship withdrew.]

Major General Sir WILLIAM ERSKINE, Bart. called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Were you employed as a major general in the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I was.

Had you any personal knowledge of Antwerp?—I had.

At what period were you at Antwerp?—In 1794.

Had you any opportunity of becoming

acquainted with the state of the fortifications at Antwerp?—I was often in the town of Antwerp at that period, and I several times went round for the purpose of seeing the works.

Will you be good enough to state the result of your observations, and the opinion you formed upon those works?—The town of Antwerp at that period had not been kept up as a place of war for nearly 20 years; I believe the ditches of the place were all dry; the ravelins and counterscarps of all the works are faced with stone; by the counterscarp I mean the side of the ditch. Next the country there are some counterscarps, three or four if not more ravelins, but all the curtains of the place are not covered by ravelins; water can be admitted into the ditch whenever it is thought necessary, by opening the sluices, and one tide is perfectly sufficient to fill the ditch. At the period I was there the ditches of the citadel were full of water, but the ditches of the town were all dry. The citadel is a regular pentagon, with ravelins before all the curtains, the ditches were extremely deep and broad, it is a very high work, it stands upon rather elevated ground, and it entirely commands the town.

What is your opinion as to whether the citadel of Antwerp was capable of sustaining a siege?—It is my opinion that that the citadel of Antwerp was at that time capable of sustaining a siege, as the citadel of Antwerp was at that time kept up as a place of war, though the town was not.

Supposing the town to be garrisoned, was it your opinion that the town also, with the protection the citadel would afford to it, would make a considerable resistance against a hostile army?—Undoubtedly the town of Antwerp, in my opinion, might have been put in a perfect state to stand a siege, with a sufficient number of hands employed, in the course of one week. I saw no deficiency whatever in any of the works; there were no breaches whatever in any of the works; the only thing necessary to be done was the removing of the stone bridges over the ditch, and the making up of the bankets on the interior side of the parapet, which I conceive might all have been done within the time specified with a sufficient number of men.

Could the want of palisades have been easily supplied, or would it materially

have endangered the safety of the place?—Undoubtedly not, because the ditch was wet, therefore the want of palisades would not have been any thing very material.

Supposing from rubbish having fallen in or from mud having accumulated, the ditch might in some parts have been fordable, would that have materially endangered the safety of the place, or could those obstacles have been shortly removed?—Undoubtedly, if the ditch was fordable in any place it would have materially injured the safety of the place; with respect to the removing those obstacles, that depended upon the quantity of obstacles, and the number of men employed in removing them.

Supposing these fords not to have been very wide, and the depth of water not less than five feet, could not the place, notwithstanding that circumstance, have been put in a considerable state of defence?—If the water was five feet over those obstacles, I call that a wet ditch wholly impracticable.

Supposing there were one or two places where the stone part of the wall had been broken down nearly to the edge of the water of no very considerable width, would that circumstance have rendered the place indefensible?—Certainly not, because of the wet ditch in front of it, which might be filled before we could arrive at that deficiency.

Supposing near any of those fordable places alluded to, there were places in the rampart where one or two people might ascend or not more than two people could ascend abreast, could not those places have been so repaired as not materially to diminish the defensibility of the place?—Undoubtedly, if such places did exist the place would be much weaker on account of them; as to the quickness of their being repaired, that depended entirely upon the number of hands and the materials, whether they were actually upon the spot to repair those places, any thing else would be a matter of opinion.

Supposing these places to have been merely of such a nature, that persons wishing to pass by night could let themselves over the rampart, could that rampart not have been repaired with earth in a very short time, with very little labour?—I cannot give a direct answer to that question, I am not a professional engineer, though I have made that part of my profession my study.

Are you acquainted with the situation

of the docks and arsenals at Antwerp?—I am acquainted with the situation of the docks and arsenals at Antwerp, by information while on the late Expedition.

From the information you received, do you believe that they would be completely protected by the citadel?—The arsenal is situated all along the bank of the river from one extremity of the town to the other, stretching to the citadel; this arsenal has been made within these few years by the French, the houses that formerly stood in that situation have been pulled down for the purpose, it is divided from the town by a wall excepting upon what is called the esplanade, which is an open ground; between the citadel and the town there it is only a palisade.

Do you know whether any part of the town of Antwerp can be covered by an inundation?—A small part of the lower extremity of the town, that is the northern face, I believe, to the extent of about two bastions, can be covered by an inundation.

Do you know whereabouts the red gate is?—I do not know the name of any of the gates of Antwerp excepting from a plan; I never asked the names of the gates when I was there.

Are you acquainted with the Tete de Flandre?—I am, I was in that work at the same period that I was at Antwerp, namely 1794.

Will you state your opinion of that work, and whether its batteries would command any portion of the river approaching to Antwerp?—The fort of the Tete de Flandre is a crown work, it consists of three bastions and two ravelins, it is situated in the angle of the river opposite the town; undoubtedly from that part of it which touches the river, guns might be brought to bear upon ships in the river, the ramparts and counterscarp are faced with stone, and I remarked that the ramparts are considerably higher than the ramparts of the town of Antwerp.

Supposing there were in Antwerp a garrison of 10,000 men, including irregulars, what force should you think would be necessary to invest or besiege the place?—That (may I presume to say) is so vague a question, that I cannot possibly answer it; if the question could be put in the relative situations of the French and of the British, as they may at any time be supposed to be, that I could answer distinctly.

Supposing a British force of 25,000 men appeared before Antwerp, and that there

were in Antwerp 5,000 troops, independent of the Burgher guard and artificers, and the crews of the ships which were in the Scheldt in the months of July and August last, amounting to 5 or 6,000 men, do you think that that force would have been capable of taking Antwerp?—That would entirely depend upon the enemy's force that was in the field independently of the garrison.

Supposing the force alluded to in the last question to be in Antwerp, do you think it could be taken without the operations of a regular siege?—Undoubtedly not.

Has it by any means come to your knowledge, whether since the period you were at Antwerp any part of the works had been repaired by the French?—It has.

State what you know upon that circumstance.—I had a great deal of communication upon that subject through a channel I can perfectly depend upon; that information I believe is now printed, and will be laid before the House; the French have made no addition to the works of Antwerp from what they stood formerly, but they have put in a perfect state of repair all the works that did exist, and removed the stone bridges that were over the ditches, and placed drawbridges in the common manner.

At what period did you understand that the stone bridges were removed, and the drawbridges erected in their place?—I cannot precisely answer that question, but I spoke with a mason in South Beveland, and several workmen who had been employed the year before in the reparation of the works.

Do you know whether the citadel commanded the dockyard at Antwerp?—The citadel completely commands the whole arsenal.

Do you know how far above Antwerp ships of the line might be carried with their lower tiers out, and how high they might be carried supposing all their guns out?—I do not know that from my own personal knowledge, but from information, which I believe is most perfectly correct, I know ships of the line, with their guns and stores out, can go to Dendermonde, which is 20 miles above Antwerp, and that ships of the line, with all their guns and stores in, may go within about one mile of Rupplemonde, which is nearly five miles above Antwerp.

Is not Dendermonde a fortified town?—



It is a fortified town, but I do not believe the works have been kept in a very good state of repair.

Is it always usual in fortresses of the extent of Antwerp to keep the guns in the embrasures at all times?—Certainly not.

What length of time, supposing that there were no guns in the embrasures of the town, do you think it would have taken to have armed the batteries?—I think to have armed the town against a *coup de main*, that is to say, to have put the guns in the batteries without laying the platforms, that might have been accomplished with a sufficient number of hands in one day; but if the platforms were to be laid to stand a regular siege, that would depend upon the quantity of materials and the number of workmen that could be employed upon such a work in the town.

What number of workmen do you think would have been necessary to have placed the town in the course of one week in such a state that we could not have taken it without a siege?—It would require me some time to make that calculation, I can make it if it is necessary.

Supposing, besides the garrison, there were from 6 to 800 workmen in the docks, would not such a body of labourers have made very considerable progress in the course of a week?—Undoubtedly they would, probably in that time they would have completed the whole of the platforms, if there was wood sufficient in the arsenal.

Do you know whether there were any platforms of fixed masonry in Antwerp?—I do not know.

Have you any knowledge of the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik?—I never was personally in either the fort of Lillo or of Liefkenshoeik, but I have had a great deal of information with respect to both of them, upon which I can perfectly depend, and by which I can describe those places.

Will you describe those forts, as well as the means by which they may be defended?—The fort of Lillo is a regular pentagon, it has ravelins before all the curtains, there is also a covered way, the ditches are deep and wide, the ramparts and counterscarps of all the works are faced with stone, it is about the size and pretty nearly of the same construction as citadel of Antwerp, but the ramparts are not nearly so high nor the ditches so broad; there is a small town in the place; the whole country round fort Lillo can be

inundated as far as Antwerp, so that the place can only be approached upon one narrow dyke not more than thirty feet broad. At the period the British Expedition was in the Scheldt a part of this inundation was made, but I cannot now speak from memory as to the exact polders inundated; by polders I mean the portion of the land surrounded by a dyke; with respect to Liefkenshoeik it is a quadrangular fort standing opposite to Lillo, the works of that fort also are all faced with stone and the ditches are deep, the whole country round Liefkenshoeik can be inundated; while the British Expedition was in the Scheldt, three polders upon that side were inundated, namely, the lower Doel Polder, the upper Doel Polder in which the fort stands, and the Aremburgh Polder, which stretches from this to the village of Keildricht in the direction of Hulst; this fort the same as Lillo cannot be approached except on one dyke, not more than 30 feet wide.

Do you know whether there are any casemates bomb proof?—As to Liefkenshoeik, I cannot speak with any certainty; in Lillo there are casemates for about 400 men.

What number of men would you consider to be a competent garrison for those forts?—2,000 men would be a complete garrison for Lillo, and 1,000 probably for Liefkenshoeik; but they might be defended by a great deal smaller garrison.

With the aid of the inundation, what do you conceive would be the smallest garrison by which they could have been defended for any considerable time against such means as we had of attacking them?—In case either of those forts had been attacked by the British, I conceive that the enemy would have put a very small garrison into them, because they could, whenever they chose, reinforce that garrison or relieve it from Antwerp, as it was impossible to cut off the communication between either of those places and Antwerp on account of the inundation, and of course they would not choose to fatigue their troops by having so many of them exposed, at one time, in either of those forts.

What length of siege do you think fort Lillo could have maintained?—Upon that point it would be necessary for me to enter into some minute calculations, probably too long for the Committee; I cannot answer satisfactorily without entering into them.

Do you think fort Lillo could have been defended for a fortnight?—Undoubtedly ; I should have stated a much longer period than that.

Do you conceive it could have been defended for a month?—I will state, as precisely as I can, how long I think that fort could have been defended. To have landed an army to have attacked fort Lillo, and to have invested that place, would not have taken up less than three days ; the bringing of the heavy artillery, fascines, and stores of every kind from the shore to the depot of the trenches, all of which must have been done by hand, could not have taken up less than five days, making in all eight days before the trenches could have been opened. I conceive from the great difficulty of approaching the place, it could not possibly have been taken under twenty days of open trenches ; I am stating the shortest time I think possible ; making in all 28 days from the commencement of the operation.

From whence do you suppose it would have been necessary to have carried those fascines?—Those fascines must have been all brought from South Beveland, or out of the ships from England, and landed upon the coast immediately opposite to the fort, what is called the Santvliet coast, about four miles distant from the fort.

Are you acquainted with the fort of Bathz?—I am.

Will you have the goodness to state what your opinion of that fort is, and of the means of defending it?—The fort of Bathz is a very bad work indeed, quite irregular, and not at all flanked, you can approach it by the dyke close to the fort under cover ; I do not think it could make any great resistance, the works are all of earth, no stone.

Will you state what length of time it would have required to have disembarked an army of 25,000 men at Santvliet, with the ordnance that would be necessary for the siege of Antwerp?—I conceive 25,000 men might have been landed in one day quite easily ; if sufficient boats and energy was used, two or three days would land the whole of the ordnance stores upon the beach, provided the storeships were close to the beach.

Do you include landing all that was necessary for the bombardment of Antwerp, including the horses?—It is a difficult question to answer exactly. It is impos-

sible for me to state accurately, unless I previously make a calculation of the amount of the stores actually to be landed, and the number of horses.

Are you conversant with the roads from Santvliet to Antwerp, supposing the low country to be inundated, or supposing it to be dry?—I am acquainted with the road from Antwerp to Bergen-op-Zoom, but I never was at Santvliet ; that road passes about three miles from Santvliet, it is not a paved road ; the road leading from Santvliet to Antwerp joins the road I have described, but three miles of it I never was.

At what time do you imagine an army of 25,000 men landed at Santvliet would march to Antwerp, taking with them all that was necessary for the bombardment of Antwerp?—An army of 25,000 men might indubitably march to Antwerp in one day ; but as to the conveyance of all the stores necessary for a siege, which must consist of some thousand tons, upon a sandy road nineteen miles, that would depend entirely upon the means of bringing forward those stores, whether there were sufficient horses ; or it must be done by the labour of men.

In what time would they march to Antwerp, supposing a bombardment alone was intended, and with the horses which accompanied the Expedition?—I do not know how many horses accompanied the Expedition for that purpose, or whether there were any at all.

How many horses do you think would have been necessary upon that road to have drawn a thirteen inch mortar with its bed from Santvliet to Antwerp, and within what time?—I conceive that it would take at the very least ten or twelve horses ; as to the time, it would be at a pace as slow as those horses would go.

What number of horses would have been necessary upon the same road to have drawn an iron twenty-four pounder upon a travelling carriage?—It would have required nearly the same number of horses. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

The Witness was again called in.

When you were in South Beveland, did you receive any information upon which you could depend of the state of the French forces at any period?—I received considerable information from the 6th to the 24th of August, from quarters upon which I could depend ; that information is, I believe, all printed.

Will you state the substance of the information you received, and the periods at which that information was received?—That is a question which it is quite impossible for me to answer, because I was only summoned yesterday: I have not a single paper of any kind with me in town, therefore with respect to the dates it is not in my power to do it; I can state from memory, I believe, pretty nearly the substance of the first communication with respect to the enemy's force, because they were not then numerous, but the subsequent communications entered into considerable detail, which it is impossible for me to recollect without having the papers with me.

What was the substance of the first communication?—The first communication I received was from a most respectable quarter in which I placed implicit confidence; it stated as nearly as I can recollect, as follows, the enemy's force on or about the 5th of August; at that period there were six battalions of Dutch in Bergen-op-Zoom, namely, four of infantry of the line, and two of guards and five companies of artillery; there was a battalion of Dutch heavy infantry at Tolen; there were at Antwerp three battalions, one of which was French; there were cantoned between Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom at Cappel, two battalions of French infantry of the line, and one battalion of Dutch light infantry, together with ten squadrons of cavalry, namely, six squadrons of Dutch, four of which were hussars and two cuirassiers, two squadrons of French cuirassiers and two ditto of dragoons; besides that force there were in Antwerp about 4,500 men, the workmen in the dock-yard and arsenals; those men were formed into regular battalions, and had regular officers placed over them, and had been disciplined for between two and three years. The crews of the fleet at that period amounted to about 11,000 men, including the flotilla; in each ship of war there were between 3 and 400 troops of the line, regular soldiers; there was besides that force, some force in the places of Dutch Flanders, but I do not know the exact extent of it.

Was there any in Lillo, Liefkenshoeik or Cadsand, at that period?—Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were garrisoned from the fleet; Lillo had a garrison of about 1,000 men, Liefkenshoeik 500; with respect to Cadsand, I have already said, I do not know particularly the force in Dutch Flanders.

Was the whole of this force in these stations on the 6th or 5th of August?—I have already said, not having my papers or memoranda with me, I cannot positively say whether it was the 5th or 6th.

You have stated that in the year 1794, from your own observation, you found the citadel of Antwerp a strong and perfect work; from the best information that you have been able to obtain since, do you think upon the whole it is as strong or stronger than it was at that time?—I believe the citadel of Antwerp remains precisely in the same situation as it was at that time.

State whether, previously to the sailing of the Expedition, you were consulted by any of his Majesty's ministers as to the state of defence and fortifications of Antwerp?—I never was consulted by any of his Majesty's ministers upon that subject.

State whether you made any communication, of your own accord, to any of his Majesty's ministers upon that subject?—I never did; it was not my business to obtrude my opinions upon his Majesty's ministers.

Did you communicate to the commander in chief of the Expedition the information or any part of it, which you have now communicated to the House?—I never did to the commander of the Expedition, as I had not the honour of knowing my lord Chatham; I was at Deal, and the headquarters of the army were at Ramsgate, so that I had no communication with his lordship whatever before the embarkation of the troops.

Did you make any communication of this nature to the commander in chief during the time that you were in South Beveland?—Undoubtedly, all the information I received I communicated immediately to the quarter-master-general.

Do you recollect when you made that communication?—I have already said that I have not any of my papers in town with me, and it is impossible for me to state the dates of a great many letters; but I made that communication from time to time as often as I received it, from the 6th of August to the 24th, in private letters to the quarter-master-general of the army.

Inform the Committee whether, in the estimate which you gave to the Committee of the length of time which you supposed it might require to take the fort of Lillo you took into account the possible assistance that might be drawn from the fleet in the Scheldt?—Certainly, I did; I

conceive that the fleet could very little have accelerated the surrender, because I conceive that such a place so situated, with the means of being relieved and reinforced at the pleasure of the enemy, could not have been taken without a breach having been made and the assault given.

Inform the Committee what the width of the river is between the Tete-de-Flandre and the town of Antwerp?—I cannot state that exactly, but as far as I recollect, I conceive it to be about eight hundred yards at the utmost, probably not so much.

Do you know of a ford across the Bergen-op-Zoom channel?—I do.

Did you examine it yourself?—I did.

Do you happen to recollect whether about the time that the army reached Bathz, the tides were spring tides or neap tides?—That I cannot answer.

Do you consider that the ford was practicable for infantry and cavalry?—I should conceive for not more than one horse.

It was practicable for cavalry?—As far as I am a judge, it would have been possibly very difficult for cavalry; I cannot answer that, for I never saw a horse pass through it, but I have seen men pass through it. I think that that ford would have been an excessively difficult one indeed, both for cavalry and cannon, because that the ground upon this side arriving at it is very much broken indeed, which I think cannon could hardly have passed over, and cavalry with the greatest difficulty. I do not know the opposite side of the ford, but I was informed it was more difficult than the Bathz side.

In your opinion, supposing a force of 20,000 men had been assembled in South Beveland by the end of the first week in August, and that the distinguished officers who commanded there had had power to act, might any blow have been struck, by *coup de main* or otherwise, that might have facilitated the attainment of the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I think it would have been wholly impracticable, at any period, to have taken Antwerp by a *coup de main*, or any of the forts I have described. I do not know in ancient or modern history, of a place with a wet ditch and ramparts, the counterscarps of which were faced with stone, that ever was taken by a *coup de main*, excepting that the place was surprised, and that the enemy went in at the gates; which could not be the case with Antwerp.

Were you at Antwerp at the same time with sir D. Dundas?—At the same period.

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What rank in the army did you hold at that time?—I was then major to the 15th light dragoons, and aid-de-camp to my father, second in command in the army.

Who was the first in command?—The duke of York.

Was not sir David Dundas for a short time in the command of the army in Antwerp?—I know nothing about that circumstance; I myself was in quarters at Contaag about five miles from it; I went into Antwerp from curiosity merely.

Do you know from the information you received, in what part of the town of Antwerp the French ships building there were lying?—They were lying in the arsenal, I have already described, all along the river between the citadel and the lower extremity of the town.

Was there any possibility of those ships being destroyed in that arsenal from the land side, without the British being in possession of the town?—Impracticable.

Are there any telegraphs established between Cadsand and Flushing?—I cannot answer that question.

Are there any telegraphs along the river?—I had no opportunity of knowing with respect to Cadsand, the only telegraphs I know of are the great line of telegraphs which passes from Flushing to Amsterdam; there are two telegraphs upon that line, one on North Beveland and the other on the island of Schowen, both of which I have seen; there is also a telegraph on the church of Ziricksee, which communicates I believe to Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp.

Can you say whether an enemy appearing off the coast on the Cadsand or Flushing side, that circumstance can be communicated in a short time by telegraph to Antwerp?—I conceive, but this is only matter of opinion, that before our anchors were down in the Roompot, the enemy knew of our approach both in Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom, because there are lines of telegraph to both places.

Of the force which you state you were informed the enemy possessed about the 5th or 6th of Aug. in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, how much do you suppose would have been thrown into Antwerp in the course of two or three days?—Of the force I have stated that at Cappel might have been thrown into Antwerp in a few hours; that in Bergen-op-Zoom, if the enemy chose to send it to Antwerp, might have sent in one day or two days at the utmost.

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What force, from the information you have received, could the enemy, had he been so disposed, have thrown into Antwerp in two or three days?—They might have thrown in all the force I have described.

To what amount?—That will be seen from what I have already said.

Can you form any estimate as to the number?—I do not know, but I believe that these corps were not very strong, the Dutch battalions in particular I do not believe were beyond 5 or 600 men at the utmost.

Could the enemy have assembled in the course of two or three days 10,000 men capable of defending Antwerp?—I have already stated the force that was there.

Could the enemy, in the course of two or three days, have collected from 10 to 1,500 men in your opinion to defend Antwerp?—I have already answered that question.

Supposing the enemy with 15,000 men within the works of Antwerp, and a British force besieging it of 30,000 men before that town, what would have been the fate of our army, not supposing an exterior army to attack our besieging army; do you suppose they would have any probability of success?—I believe that 30,000 men might have taken the town of Antwerp if they had not been at all disturbed without, and you had given them plenty of time to do it in.

What time do you think it would require to take it with 30,000 men, and 15,000 men to garrison it?—I must enter into a minute detail to answer that question.

Supposing the army to have arrived before the town with a garrison of 15,000 strong, and the besieging army 30,000 strong?—I think that the stores and every thing necessary for the siege of Antwerp so garrisoned, could not possibly have been brought up under 21 days, unless there was a great quantity of horses indeed employed, so that the batteries should open in the first parallel; that is, it would be 21 days to the opening of the batteries in the first parallel, that is the shortest time that I think possible. I think that to attack a town so garrisoned, it would be necessary afterwards to proceed by a regular siege by the operations of a second and third parallel, to have breached the place and filled the ditch before the assault could be given; all which operations could not take up under

20 days at the least, that is the lowest calculation I can put it at.

After the 25th of August, at that late period, what probability was there, in your opinion, of success in any operation against Lillo and Liefkenshoeik?—I conceive that if any operation had been attempted against Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, it would have been at the utmost risk for the safety of the whole army.

Allowing for the possibility of those two forts being captured at that late season, would it have insured the capture of the town and citadel of Antwerp?—By no means, I deem that any attack upon Antwerp after the 25th of August, would have been utterly impracticable by the British force then there.

Do you remember the names of any other officers of rank who were in or near Antwerp in the year 1794, when you were there?—There were no general officers with the Expedition, that I am aware of that were previously at Antwerp, except lieutenant-general Brownrigg.

Do you recollect the names of any officers who were in or near Antwerp in the year 1794?—Upon some consideration I dare say I could recollect many: I remember my brother, major gen. Erskine, for one, and lieutenant gen. Vyse; but I cannot call to my recollection others at this moment.

If the fortress of Bathz had been skillfully and obstinately defended, what time would it have taken to have effected a practicable breach which the British troops could have assaulted?—There would have been no necessity for a breach at all at Bathz, if the ditch had been filled the troops could have assaulted it immediately, for the works were earth.

What countryman was it from whom you got the intelligence of the numbers, was it a British subject?—Not a British subject.

A Frenchman or a Dutchman?—A Dutchman.

Are there any suburbs to the fortress of Antwerp?—There are houses without the gates upon all the roads, but I cannot tell the exact extent.

To what extent and how close do they approach to the works of the town?—That question I cannot answer correctly, but I recollect that there were some, the suburbs are of no great extent.

When did you first understand that the Expedition was destined to Antwerp?—I did not positively know that the Expedition

was destined to Antwerp before I was at Deal; but I certainly surmised it six weeks before.

Did you communicate your impression upon the state of Antwerp, and the difficulty of the operations against it to any officer at Deal, and to whom?—I did to many; I communicated to all my friends my opinion with respect to the difficulties of the Expedition. I think I communicated that opinion to all the general officers at Deal, and to both of the admirals at Deal, and to sir H. Popham. I was particularly anxious upon this subject, because I thought that those gentlemen were not aware of the difficulties they were to meet with.

When lord Castlereagh had conversations with you at Deal, do you recollect having communicated to lord Castlereagh the nature of the information you have stated to this Committee?—Never to his lordship: I did not think it proper to obtrude my opinion on his Majesty's ministers; I thought it possible that the gentlemen to whom I communicated, might have communicated it to his Majesty's ministers; had it not been for that circumstance, I might have communicated it to lord Castlereagh.

Is it probable that the enemy would have destroyed the suburbs?—Undoubtedly.

So as to prevent their being any means of annoyance from, or protection to the enemy?—Undoubtedly.

Would setting houses on fire remove the impediments of giving cover to a besieging army attacking the place?—That would depend upon the materials of which the houses were made.

Are not the houses there in general built of stone?—The houses in the town of Antwerp are in general built of stone.

Do you recollect so much of the place as to be able to state to the Committee, whether, along the bank of the river near where the sluices are, there is any high embankment that would afford cover to a besieging army to make their approaches near to the place?—I do not recollect that circumstance.

From the information you obtained respecting Lillo, can you state whether there was any embankment on each side of fort to prevent the river overflowing the country?—There is an embankment which runs along the whole course of the Scheldt from Antwerp to Bergen-op-Zoom, where that embankment touches the fort of Lillo, the glacis of the place forms the embankment towards the river.

Are you able to state to the Committee, from any information you received, what the height and breadth of that embankment is?—The embankment is, I believe, of a similar height to all the others in that part of the country; it was made for no military purpose, but to keep out the water of the Scheldt.

Are you able to state the height and breadth of the embankment?—The embankment must be high enough to prevent the tide at the highest spring from overflowing the country, and as the tide rises nearly twenty feet, of course it must be considerably higher than that.

Do you mean to say that the bank is considerably higher than 20 feet?—I say that the embankment was made to keep out the waters of the Scheldt, and as the waters of the Scheldt rise at high spring tides nearly 20 feet, the embankment must of course be that height.

If an embankment is 20 feet high, do not you imagine it must be at the base about 30 feet wide, and probably at the top about 20 feet?—I cannot possibly enter into a calculation of that sort, that is a question in mechanics.

The reason of my putting this question is to endeavour to ascertain whether or not the embankment is of such a nature as to afford cover for an attacking army to make their approaches near at hand?—The forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoek can be approached by no means whatever but by making zig-zags along the dyke, and that is the great strength of those places; the only approach is upon this dyke; you must approach along this dyke by zig-zags.

Do you recollect so much of Antwerp as to be able to state to the Committee whether there is a glacis and a covered way, or merely a ditch with a counter-scarp wall?—I believe there is both a glacis and a covered way, but at the time I was there the covered way was quite out of repair.

Do not you think that a bank of 20 feet high and probably 30 wide, would give very great cover for a besieging army to open their batteries close to the place?—That depends upon the direction of that embankment with respect to the works of the place.

Lillo being a regular pentagon as you have described, with ravelins, is it probable an embankment constructed merely to keep out the water from the river, should be regularly flanked by any parts of such

a work?—Undoubtedly the embankment by which you must approach the fort of Lillo is flanked by the works of that place, it runs I believe at right angles upon one of the bastions.

Do you understand that there is a similar bank close to the works at Antwerp, along the banks of the river?—I have already said there was a dyke that extended all the way from Antwerp to Bergen-op-Zoom, all along the course of the river.

Do you recollect so much of the Tete de Flandre, the crown-work you mention, as to state whether it protects the whole of that side of the river so as to prevent any works that might be erected by our army from destroying the arsenals?—The Tete de Flandre certainly flanks a part of that dyke; whether it flanks the whole, or to what distance, I cannot answer.

If the crown-work does not defend the bank of the river, do not you think that batteries constructed on the opposite bank would very easily destroy the whole of that arsenal?—There is no manner of doubt that a sufficient number of mortars placed upon the bank of that river would in time destroy the arsenal.

Do you understand that along the bank of the river at Antwerp where the arsenals were constructed by the French, there were any fortifications or works, or merely a wall to prevent a communication between the town and the arsenal?—There was no wall at all along the bank of the river, the wall I mentioned before was between the town and the arsenal; before the approach of the British Squadron, that part of the town was wholly open to the river, the enemy however began constructing works immediately upon the appearance of the British, and by about the 15th of Aug. several batteries were finished upon this line, extending from the citadel to the other extremity of the town.

[The witness withdrew.—The Chairman was directed to report progress and ask leave to sit again.]

## 10.

*Mercurii, 21<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER, Bart. in the Chair.

[The following Papers were read.]

*Copy of a LETTER from Rear Admiral Sir RICHARD J. STRACHAN, Bart. K. B. to*

*Lieut. General the right honourable the Earl of CHATHAM, K. G.*

*Middleburg, 8th August 1809.*

“My Lord; The letter which your lordship did me the honour to write to me on the 4th instant, I only received on the 5th, and I have ever since been so pressed with business that I had not an opportunity of answering it; which I hope is the less material, as I have had the honour of a conversation with your lordship on the subject of its contents.

“Your lordship must be aware how very adverse the state of the weather has been to all our operations; but still, under the difficulties that have arisen, a vast number of vessels of different descriptions, have been carried through the intricate passage of the Slough, and are now in the West Scheldt.

“The importance of the island of Cad-sand was perfectly understood before we left England; and I was happy to find your lordship was impressed with the same sentiment; but it is to be regretted that the strength of the enemy and the foulness of the weather prevented the division of the marquis of Huntley from landing at that place.

“The distance between Flushing and Breskens is so short, that it is impossible entirely to cut off the communication; but it may be so impeded, which I trust it now is, as to make it very dangerous for the enemy to attempt any thing beyond a single boat, though there are so many circumstances in his favour, of wind, weather, shortness of distance, with covering batteries on each side, and dark nights, that he may occasionally effect it.

“I have ordered all the frigates to pass up the Scheldt, and the line-of-battle ships to follow; and having directed heavy guns to be mounted on board 20 light transports, and the long boats of the fleet armed with their carronades, I hope I shall be able by the day after to-morrow at furthest, to proceed up the Scheldt with the flotilla and fire-vessels of every description, except those just mentioned, to be followed by the frigates as they come in, and the line-of-battle ships in succession.

“As South Beveland is in our possession, I am not aware that it will be necessary to trouble your lordship to alter any of your military arrangements; but if the Elvoetsdyke channel is closed, of which there is a report, and the enemy has erected any works above Terneuse,

then it may be necessary to recur to your lordship's opinion about a co-operative force for that point.

"I hope we shall be able to prevent any communication with South Beveland and the South coast of the river, because the enemy has none of those advantages there that he has between Breskins and Flushing.

"In regard to the East Scheldt, I have placed a strong squadron there under adm. Keats, except in gun-vessels, of which he is deficient, in consequence of the number required for the operations in the West Scheldt; and I will again call his attention to the importance of the Zype passage, and strengthen him in regard to gun-vessels whenever I have a sufficient number to spare.

"If by the practical effects of a determined fire from the battery now ready to open upon the town of Flushing, your lordship should be of opinion, that by still confining your operations principally to the land side, the siege will be prolonged to any length of inconvenience, I think it right to state to your lordship, that I shall have no hesitation in going alongside the batteries with six line-of-battle ships, under a previous concert for co-operation with the army in such a plan of attack.

"If the object of Flushing had been the only point to be attended to, I should have offered this mode for your lordship's consideration before now; but as I viewed the destruction of the fleet up the Scheldt as the main object, I rested in a great measure my means of attack on the effective line-of-battle ships; though, if I meet any impediment in going up the river, I shall leave those ships, and proceed in the frigates, with all the small armed vessels, to Bathz, where I can more easily decide, from the latest local intelligence, on the method best suited to carry into execution with the least possible delay, the remaining objects of the Expedition, as far as they relate to the enemy's fleet, which I shall previously communicate to your lordship; and I shall be very happy, whenever you have occasion to apply to me, to mark my readiness to meet your lordship's wishes in any co-operation you may think proper to suggest. I have the honour to be, my lord, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) "R. J. STRACHAN."

*Copy of a PAPER, submitted by Lieut. Gen. BROWNRIGG, Quarter-master General, to the Lieut. Generals of the Army assembled at Fort Bathz:—27th August 1809.*

"Fort Bathz, 26th August 1809.

"The armament having arrived at the point, from whence further arrangements are to be made for carrying into effect the ulterior object of the Expedition; and various important considerations combining to call for an immediate determination.—How far that object can be obtained with the means in our power; it becomes necessary to detail these means, and to advert to circumstances which have ensued from the commencement of the undertaking.

"And first, it may be premised, that according to the original plan of operations, it was intended that a division of the army should be landed on Cadsand, and by that means secure to our fleet an entrance into the West Scheldt, and prevent succours being thrown into Flushing; thus effectually blockading the fortress by sea, while the army which disembarked on the north side of Walcheren completed the investment on the land side. The landing on Cadsand became impracticable from the tempestuous state of the weather, the force of the enemy, and from a deficiency in means to debark at once a body of troops capable of contending with the numbers there was every reason to suppose would be prepared to dispute a landing. These circumstances, which it was not possible to control, gave the enemy the opportunity of largely augmenting his garrison of Flushing, which, together with the nature of the ground on which the attack was to be carried on, rendered still more difficult from the extensive powers of inundation in the enemy's hands, protracted the reduction of the place to fifteen days from the period of our appearing before it; notwithstanding the unremitting exertions of the navy and troops engaged in the operation. With these uncontrollable obstacles to contend with, the prospect soon vanished of being able by a rapid and simultaneous effort, to carry the object of the Expedition to its ultimate extent, and which could alone insure the complete success of the enterprise. The enemy having for some days enjoyed an uninterrupted communication with Cadsand, and having by this means more than doubled his force, led to the necessity of adding to the besieging corps a large portion of the force destined to proceed by the West Scheldt to the more distant points of attack; and rendered that force unavailable for that object, until we became possessed of Flushing.



" Having thus stated the actual circumstances under which the armament has arrived in its present situation; we must next consider what we have yet to accomplish, and the force likely to be opposed to us.

The strength of the enemy, by concurring intelligence, appears to be nearly as follows: In Bergen-op-Zoom, 6,000; Breda, 2,000; Cantoned between Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp, 15,000; In Antwerp, 11,000; On the left Bank of the Scheldt, 3,000; In Tholen, 500; Total 35,500.

" Our total numbers, including artillery, cavalry, and infantry, amounts to about 30,000 effectives; of this 6,000, are left in Walcheren, and 2,000 must necessarily be left in South Beveland, giving a disposable force of only 22,000 men for the siege of Antwerp, and the other operations connected with it.

" In proceeding to the siege of Antwerp, it would no doubt be a leading object in the plan of operations, to accommodate it as far as possible to obtain the co-operation of our naval means, without which, the enterprise would be clogged with the difficulty of transporting by land from the point of debarkation, through an enemy's country, all the ordnance, stores, and entrenching tools, necessary to undertake the siege of a considerable place, and to provide the means of subsistence for which we could not well command the resources of the country beyond the reach of our arms; and it would be a considerable encumbrance of these difficulties to collect if they can be had, or to transport if they be prepared, the vast quantities of platforms, fascines, and gabions required for such a siege.

" The plan by which only the co-operation of our naval force can be obtained, would be by the reduction of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and the complete investment of Antwerp on both banks of the river. The necessity of masking Bergen-op-Zoom and Breda, with a corps of at least 8,000 men, would in the divided state of the remainder, acting on this plan, offer to our enemy some opportunities of attacking our force in detail, with means less formidable, and consequently sooner collected, than those with which he would dare to meet our united force.

" Attending to all the objects essential to this extensive plan, the part of our army on the right bank, and which may be considered the besieging army; and from

which all other laborious duties must be exacted, would not exceed 10,000 men; as appears from the statement herewith detailed:

" Total force .....	30,000
" Walcheren.....	6,000
" South Beveland.....	2,000
	<hr/> 8,000
" For further operations.....	22,000
" Covering army, and to guard the depôts of stores and provisions, and for escorts .....	8,000
" For the reduction of Liefkenshoeik, and for the occupation of the left bank of the Scheldt	4,000
	<hr/>
" For the siege of Antwerp...	10,000

" When it is considered that the concurring testimony of the intelligence received, states the garrison of Antwerp to exceed in strength this small corps, it would be unjustifiable to act by a plan which would place our army in a situation in which it may be fairly reckoned possible we should be obliged to raise the siege, and risk an action in retreating, with the probable loss of our battering train, and the greater part, if not the whole of our cavalry. Thus circumstanced, the detached corps on the left bank of the Scheldt could not contribute its support, but be forced to retire with precipitation.

" This plan of operations, therefore, though in principle the best, is evidently not suited to our comparatively insufficient means; and it will now be necessary to consider, if, by any other mode of proceeding, the object can be attained.

" In seeking such an alternative, which would first imply the abandonment of the operation on the left bank, we must at once relinquish all the advantage of naval co-operation (for it is impossible to obtain it but by possessing both banks of the river) and to confine the assistance to be derived from it to protection in landing, working guns in batteries, and forwarding stores and provisions.

" In this case we have, in addition to the fortresses of Bergen-op-Zoom and Breda, that of Lillo to observe, which would now (the left bank of the Scheldt not being occupied) become a tete-de-pont for such force as the enemy might have it in his power to send from Flanders to act on our line of operations, which, added to the increased difficulties of transporting to a greater distance our artillery and

stores, must further diminish the besieging force by the necessity of establishing a yet stronger corps at the dépôt where stores are landed, and between which and the army every convoy must be strongly escorted.

"But by this plan, imposed as it is from our want of strength, Antwerp would not be completely invested, and the communication be open with all the country on the left bank of the Scheldt, to receive the incalculable means which the enemy has of increasing his force, while we are preparing for the attack of the place, and which would necessarily occupy a period not less than three weeks from the time of landing, during the most sickly season of the year, in a country strictly hostile, and incapable of furnishing any supplies whatever.

"Thus the safest and best way of attacking Antwerp far exceeds our means; while the alternative is liable to all the disadvantages of a want of naval co-operation, and an incomplete investment of the place.

"If both these modes be abandoned, it may be proper to inquire, if without laying siege to Antwerp, any attempt can be made with much prospect of success to destroy the enemy's arsenal, or shipping, and although any mode of attack, which has not system and co-operative force to recommend it, can meet with few advocates, yet any measure of bold enterprize is so congenial to our national feeling, that it becomes necessary to make some observations on the practicability of any plan of this character, which does not embrace the previous reduction of Antwerp; to which single point, however, the question of success, certainly resolves itself.

"Of such attacks, the first to be considered, is a bombardment of Antwerp; which, as it would not require any investment of the place, might possibly be thought practicable (with all our force employed) from the left bank of the Scheldt, having first reduced Liefkenshoeik and the Tete de Flandre.

"The inundation, which our information states the enemy to have made there, has probably rendered every approach to these works inaccessible, but by the dyes; on which, from our not possessing the river, our works would be enfiladed, and cannonaded from the opposite side. If even we succeed in these preliminary steps to the bombardment of Antwerp, we can but promise ourselves the destruc-

tion of some materials for ship-building, whilst the docks, sluices, works, &c. &c. which render it formidable as a naval arsenal, cannot be much injured by this mode of proceeding.

"Another plan of getting at the enemy's fleet now (with the exception of two sail of the line, and a considerable flotilla) laying about four miles above Antwerp, might be suggested by marching with all our force, to attack them with such ordnance as we can take with us from the right bank of the river.

"In this plan, naval co-operation cannot be calculated upon; and the attempt would be so rash and unadvisable, that it is only noticed, as having been suggested as one means of accomplishing the destruction of those ships.

"After the foregoing exposition of circumstances, connected with this armament, it is feared that the ultimate object to which it was directed cannot be undertaken with any rational hope of success; yet it cannot be doubted, that if Austria has not been reduced to the necessity of subscribing to terms of peace, our force may be so employed as to act powerfully in co-operation of any further struggle she may make. (Signed)

ROB. BROWNRIGG, Q. M. G."

(A true Copy.)

Rob. Brownrigg.

THE OPINIONS of the Lieutenant Generals of the Army: 27th Aug. 1809.

"Head Quarters, Fort Bathz,  
27th Aug. 1809.

"The army having arrived at the point, from whence further arrangements are to be made for carrying the ulterior objects of the Expedition into effect; and many circumstances having combined to alter materially the view in which it was undertaken;—The commander of the forces judges it proper to have recourse to the lieutenant generals of the army.—How far it appears to them advisable, that the siege of Antwerp should be engaged in; which operation, it is believed, can alone ensure the destruction of the enemy's naval arsenals at that place, and the possession of their ships of war, which are now assembled under its guns.

"By concurring intelligence, the force of the enemy is represented to be as follows: In Bergen-op-zoom 4,000; Breda 2,000; Cantonned between Ossendrecht and Antwerp 15,000; At Antwerp 11,000;

On the left bank of the Scheldt 3,000 ; In Tholen 500 ; Total 35,500.

Inundations are said to be effected round Lillo, in the country between Hulst and Liefkenshoeik, and in front of the Tête de Flandre. The defences of Antwerp are stated to be restored, the demi-revetment and sodded parapet is in good repair, the ditches are deepened and filled with water: guns are mounted on the bastions, and batteries are constructed on the quays. As a preliminary measure, the possession of forts Lillo and Liefkenshoeik is considered indispensable, the first of which being casemated is capable of sustaining a short siege. The debarkment for these operations must necessarily be in presence of the enemy, on the sands near Ossendrecht, a distance of six leagues from Antwerp, and two from Lillo; and Liefkenshoeik, supposing the inundation to be completed, can only be approached by the sea dyke.

"The probable time in which these objects can be accomplished, cannot be estimated at less than from three to four weeks, during which period the means the enemy will have of augmenting his force are incalculable.

"Our total effective force in infantry, exclusive of 6,000 men left in Walcheren, is reduced by a rapid, and it is feared increasing sickness, to 24,000 men; and which it is intended, should further operations be determined upon, to appropriate as follows: To remain in South Beveland 2,000; Covering army, to observe Breda and Bergen-op-Zoom; to guard the place of dépôt of stores and provisions, and for escorts, 8,000; Remains for the reduction of Lillo, Liefkenshoeik, and Antwerp 14,000; Total 24,000.

"The matter, therefore, for consideration, is, whether under all the circumstances so stated, it is advisable to undertake operations, so serious and extensive?

"We are of opinion, that, under all the circumstances that have been laid before us, the undertaking the siege of Antwerp is impracticable.

Signed { EYRE COOTE, ... Lieut. Gen.  
ROSSLYN, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
HUNTLEY, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
T. GROSVENOR, ... Lieut. Gen.  
JOHN HOPE, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
PAGET, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
ROB. BROWNRIGG, Lieut. Gen.

"Having decided against the expediency of undertaking the siege of Antwerp, the lieut. generals are further de-

sired to state their opinions, Whether any minor objects can be undertaken with advantage; and in particular, whether it would be advisable to attempt the reduction of forts Lillo and Liefkenshoeik?

"We are of opinion, that as the siege of Antwerp cannot be undertaken, the success of which could alone accomplish the ultimate object of the Expedition, no possible advantage can result from attempting to reduce the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik; or from undertaking any minor operations.

Signed { EYRE COOTE, ... Lieut. Gen.  
ROSSLYN, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
HUNTLEY, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
T. GROSVENOR, ... Lieut. Gen.  
JOHN HOPE, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
PAGET, ..... Lieut. Gen.  
ROB. BROWNRIGG, Lieut. Gen.

(A true Copy.)

Rob. Brownrigg, 2. M. G.

Lieut. Gen. sir JOHN HOPE, K. B. called in; and examined by the Committee.

Have you brought with you the instructions under which you sailed to the Scheldt? — I have.

Have the goodness to put them in.

Sir John Hope delivered in his Instructions, dated Ramsgate, 25th July 1809; which were read.

(Secret.) Ramsgate, 25th July 1809.

"Sir; The early possession of the island of South Beveland being of the first importance to the success of the enterprise in which the army under the command of lieut. gen. the earl of Chatham is about to engage, I have received his lordship's directions to acquaint you that this service is to be executed by the reserve of the army under your command, to which is added one squadron of the 2d regiment of light dragoons of the King's German Legion, and one company of the 95th or rifle corps; and in addition to the brigade of guns attached to the reserve, consisting of five light 6-pounders and one 5½-inch howitzer, commanded by capt. Wilmot of the royal artillery; four 5½-inch royal mortars and two 5¼-inch howitzers will be given, with a due proportion of ammunition for the aforementioned field artillery, and for small arms.

"Captain Squire, lieuts. Brown and Jones of the royal engineers have been directed to put themselves under your orders for this service.

"Rear admiral sir R. Keats commands the division of the fleet and gun-boats

destined to possess the navigation of the East Scheldt, and to co-operate with you in the capture of South Beveland, and I have the honour to transmit, for your private information, a copy of rear admiral sir Richard Strachan's instructions to that officer.

"It was first intended that this operation should be effected by the East Scheldt, a landing being made to the eastward of Goes, but it appearing that there are not sufficient means in small craft to convey the troops to that point from the ships of war in which they are embarked in less than two and probably three days, and the navigation of the East Scheldt being little understood, and doubts being entertained whether there is sufficient depth of water for the transports and victuallers that must necessarily attend this service, it is now judged most advisable that the operation should take place by the Veere passage.

"As soon therefore as the troops destined to act against Walcheren have obtained a solid footing in that island, and the forts of Den Hank, Veere and Armuyden in possession, the troops under your command will be trans-shipped in small vessels, and proceed by signal through the passage of the Vere Gaat, and make a landing good on the most convenient point at the west end of South Beveland; when you will make a disposition for the immediate attack of fort Borselen, the occupation of Goes, and the destruction of the batteries erected on the south side of the island for the defence of the navigation of the West Scheldt, reserving such as may bear on the enemy's fleet in the river, and as are necessary for securing the possession of the island. The line to be occupied in South Beveland appears to be that between the town of Goes on the left, and Eversdyck on the right, occupying the villages in front as out-posts, patrolling to Cruningen, and as far to the east end of the island as possible.

"If reserve or battering artillery appears to you necessary for the reduction of fort Borselen, Goes, or other places that may be walled or enclosed, it will be speedily forwarded on your requisition.

"A material object in possessing South Beveland, is, the making the supplies in horses, cattle and forage, in which it is said to abound, available for the purposes of the army.

"Lord Chatham therefore desires that the most effectual arrangements may be

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made by requisition to the magistrates, for obtaining all the draft horses, cattle and forage that the island affords, to be appropriated to the public service; for the value of which the deputy commissary general is to give receipts, and to cause depôts of each to be made at the most convenient points.

"If these absolutely necessary supplies cannot be obtained through the agency of the magistracy of the island, steps must be taken for securing them by means as little severe as the nature of such a measure will allow.

"You will be pleased to report for lord Chatham's information, the progress you make in the service entrusted to you, together with all extraordinary occurrences.

"His lordship commands me to express his fullest confidence in your distinguished zeal and abilities; from which he persuades himself that the army will derive the most important advantage in the execution of the arduous service it has to perform; and he is too well satisfied of your experience in service not to be assured, that within your command, the most perfect understanding will be preserved with the navy upon every occasion.

"I enclose a portable map, for your use, of the island of South Beveland, and an arrangement of signals; from which those that have been already distributed to the general officers and commanding officers of corps of the reserve, can be filled up. I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

R. BROWNRIFF, Q. M. G.

*The Hon. Lt. G. Sir John Hope, K. B.*

State to the Committee how you proceeded under those orders?—The reserve of the army embarked upon the 16th; we sailed upon the 28th, anchored upon the coast of Holland the same evening, weighed again the next morning and anchored in the Roompot, and upon the 31st sir Richard Keats came to off Ziricksee with the whole of the squadron, with an intention to disembark the troops upon South Beveland. I should state that there was a change in the orders given to the reserve: I received an order to occupy the island of Schowen for the safety of the anchorage in the Roompot; upon reaching that anchorage it was found that the security of it in no manner depended upon the island of Schowen. I reported that to the commander in chief, who sanctioned my proceeding up the East

(X)

Scheldt, and putting the original intention into execution, of disembarking in the island of South Beveland, near Goes; upon the 31st, therefore (sir Home Popham having previously sounded the channel) sir Richard Keats proceeded to Ziricksee, where he was forced to come to. The troops were that day put into the boats, but owing to a severe gale coming on it was impossible to carry the landing into execution; it was therefore the 1st of August before the reserve disembarked. Upon the 1st of August from 2,000 to 2,500 men disembarked on South Beveland, and took up nearly the line described in the instructions of the quarter master general. The next morning, the 2d, we patrolled the whole of the island, and the patrol that was sent forward towards Bathz marched within 6 or 7 miles of it by noon on that day; in the afternoon of the 2d it was found that the fort of Bathz had been evacuated by the enemy; it was accordingly immediately taken possession of. Bathz was evacuated upon the 2d; it was on the same day discovered that the enemy had abandoned the whole of the batteries along the western Scheldt, having spiked the guns, destroyed some of the carriages, and removed the ammunition; a few prisoners were made in the course of the 2d. I do not find any material occurrence from that day till the 8th, when the flotilla of the enemy lying between Bathz and Lillo came down and cannonaded the fort with very little effect; by that time five or six heavy guns and two howitzers in the fort had been rendered fit for service, and returned the fire of the enemy. There was a second attack of the enemy upon the fort of Bathz on the 8th of August with very little effect. Upon the 9th or 10th of August a part of lord Rosslyn's division and that of lord Huntley having landed in South Beveland, my lord Rosslyn took the command in South Beveland; as far as related to my division, after that we had no active service, the intermediate time was employed in collecting such resources of horses and grain as could be found; upon the 10th the flotilla under sir Home Popham anchored at Haanswart, and the 11th he reached Bathz. On the 13th eight or nine frigates reached Haanswart. The 16th we had two line-of-battle ships with some frigates at Haanswart. Upon the 19th I find six line-of-battle ships anchored at Haanswart. I do not find any material occurrence noted till on the 28th, general

Grosvenor's division was then proceeding up the Scheldt. On the 21st head quarters were at Goes. On the 23d and 24th the transports with gen. Graham's division, and I believe some of the cavalry arrived at Bathz, or were proceeding up the Scheldt. As far as related to my instructions, I believe I have stated every thing which occurs to me.

Did you find horses and provisions in the abundance which you had expected from your instructions to find them?—I found no want of horses; a very considerable supply indeed of horses, but in point of cattle I had reason at first to believe we should not be well supplied; I believe that the resources of South Beveland were afterwards increased by supplies drawn from the island of Schowen chiefly, and from North Beveland, and the troops certainly never wanted in any shape except in spirits; there was at first a very great want of spirits, which were not to be had in the island.

How soon after your arrival in South Beveland did you receive any intelligence of the state of the enemy's force or preparations?—Upon the evening of the 1st I had communication with several of the inhabitants of Goes, and from them understood in general, what was afterwards confirmed by more particular intelligence received at different dates; upon the 3d of August there seemed to be no doubt from the intelligence we had, that the enemy had certainly thrown troops into Bergen-op-Zoom.

Have the goodness to state to the Committee the information you received at different times during your continuance in South Beveland?—Upon the 8th of August the intelligence of the enemy having thrown troops into Bergen-op-Zoom was confirmed; it was also stated that troops in considerable numbers were cantoned between Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp. It was said that 2,000 French and 1,000 Dutch troops were in Antwerp, that the people belonging to the naval establishments in Antwerp had been for a considerable time trained to arms, and did duty in the town or had done duty in the town, and that troops were expected to arrive at Antwerp from Brussels. Upon the 10th it was stated to me that there were troops in Tolen, that the trees round the town, upon the glacis, and in the immediate neighbourhood of that town were cutting down, and that preparations were making to inundate the country between

Tolen and Bergen-op-Zoom, that constant patrols were upon the roads, that an order had been given in Bergen-op-Zoom for the inhabitants to supply themselves with provisions for a certain period, or to quit the town; and that in the suburbs or certain parts of the town, the inhabitants had been desired to quit their houses. The Committee will understand, that intelligence of that kind, coming from various sources, requires to be compared by the person who receives it at the time, and will receive its value from the circumstances attending it; I do not therefore pretend to vouch for it, or say that I give the whole of it implicit credit. Twenty-five thousand men were said to be in Antwerp; I state that, because I had no conception that so many men were in Antwerp at the time; 300 peasants were said to be at work upon the works of Antwerp at that time, the 10th of August; at this date the person who stated to me there was a very large garrison in Bergen-op-Zoom, at the same time in his examination, remarked this circumstance, of the inhabitants being desired to quit their houses or supply themselves with provisions, that confirmed me in the belief that a garrison was in Bergen-op-Zoom, and that a defence was to be made: it did not shew me that a certain number of men was in it, but that the enemy had thrown men into it, and were determined to defend it. Upon the 10th of August it was also stated, and to that I gave implicit credit, for I saw the ships, that the French fleet were moored close to the town of Antwerp. Upon the 11th of August it was stated, that the enemy's cantonment between Lillo and Bergen-op-Zoom had been considerably reinforced, and consisted of 5 or 6,000 men; that I had no reason to doubt, because about that time we had perceived more frequent patrols along the coast, and more movement of troops than we had before perceived. Upon the 11th of August it was stated that the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom had been changed, that French troops had been sent in lieu of Dutch troops. I never had any means of ascertaining the truth of that, and am rather inclined to believe it was not the case. Two thousand men from the Rhine were said to have arrived at Brussels a few days previously to the 11th; it was also said, that about that time there were 1,000 men at Lillo, and 500 in Liefkenshoeik; upon that I have only to say, that I believe the

number was probably exaggerated. Upon the 13th, the intelligence we had from different quarters, gave the most complete reason to believe that the inundations near the lines of Steenberg, between Tolen and Bergen-op-Zoom, had been carried into effect. On the 15th the whole of the intelligence relating to the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom, the cantonment of the enemy, and the arrival of troops, as well as the inundation on the right bank of the Scheldt, was confirmed. Upon the 16th I find there was still a more particular, and a strong confirmation of the foregoing intelligence. Upon the 18th we had intelligence of inundations on the left bank towards Liefkenshoeik, and below it towards the poll of Douel. Upon the 19th of August we were informed by a person who knew Antwerp, or stated that he knew Antwerp, that the line-of-battle ships could go about four miles above the town of Antwerp. Upon the 21st of August the French ships were stated to lie as high as the citadel of Antwerp, and that a boom had been thrown across from Lillo to Liefkenshoeik; the garrison of Antwerp was then stated to be 11,000 men. Upon the 22d of Aug. it was stated, through a channel that we thought was a secure one, that the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom consisted of from 7 to 900 men; that there were 12,000 men in cantonments between Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo; and that in all, 18,000 men were said to be along both banks of the Scheldt, comprehending, I conclude, Antwerp, the cantonment of Lillo, and what the enemy might have on the left bank; and that troops were at that time daily arriving at Antwerp; that the enemy had completed the inundation on the left bank near Liefkenshoeik, and were preparing to sink vessels in the channel. Upon the 23d of August in consequence of some conversation that had taken place relative to the works of Antwerp, it had been determined to endeavour to obtain precise information respecting the revetment of the works that was supposed to exist, and upon that date, the 23d of Aug. it was confirmed that the stone revetment of the works was in repair, or had been lately repaired. On the 28th of August we had an enumeration of the enemy's force, from a survey, which made it then amount to 21,780 men; it was stated that Bernadotte had been in Antwerp, and the removal of the ships as high as the citadel was confirmed. That was the substance of

the information that I received or that passed through me, having come from officers under me, and which I transmitted to head quarters.

On the 28th the intelligence received by you makes the enemy's force amount to 21,780 men; how do you account for the difference between those numbers and those stated in the paper addressed to the lieutenant generals the day preceding which makes the force amount to 35,000 men?—In giving that statement, I do not give it as a statement that I can in any manner vouch for, only as coming from a person employed; the generality of those persons are extremely ignorant, and as to numbers I would never give any credit to them whatever, unless strongly confirmed by other circumstances.

Was this about the highest amount to which the number was brought by the intelligence received by you, or was it the number which you believed to be nearest the truth?—That was the highest number that I received in the way of intelligence myself; it was further stated that troops were daily arriving. I believe myself the numbers might go beyond that, but I have no other means of knowing than by the intelligence I received and transmitted to head quarters.

Had you any information of the state of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik when the Expedition arrived at Bathz, or soon after, and their means of defence?—It was stated generally by the persons whom we employed, as well as by the inhabitants of South Beveland who pretended to know any thing of the matter, that the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik were in a state of defence as to the works; with respect to the garrisons, I have stated that upon one occasion 1,000 men were said to be in Lillo, and 500 in Liefkenshoeik, but that I believed they were over-rated, particularly Lillo. The enemy was very early observed to be at work (improving the works I presume) at Lillo, and I believe subsequently at Liefkenshoeik.

Did you know any thing respecting the state of Antwerp previously to the information you have stated of the 21st or 22d of August?—I was once at Antwerp, I believe in 1793, for one night, but I know nothing of the state of the works, more than in general that there was a citadel, and that it was a fortified town; the state of the works I had no opportunity of seeing, and had no recollection of them; I knew nothing of them previously to the sailing of the Expedition.

Was any plan of the Expedition communicated to you previously to your sailing?—I saw a rough draft or sketch of what is generally called the Disposition: I had no formal communication at all relative to it beyond my own instructions.

Were you ever consulted with by the commander in chief or his Majesty's ministers previously to the sailing of the Expedition, relative to the objects of the Expedition?—I was not consulted the day subsequent to lord Chatham's arrival at Ramsgate, I waited upon him as was my duty at that time; in a very short visit, not lasting a quarter of an hour, his lordship mentioned generally the object of the Expedition, but in no shape with a view to consult me certainly, nor was there any detail entered into either by his lordship or by me.

What did you understand in that conversation to be the principal objects of the Expedition?—I am not sure that the objects were at all detailed in any shape, I had understood previous to that what the objects of the Expedition were; that the capture of Walcheren, and the capture or destruction of the enemy's arsenals in the Scheldt, were the objects of the Expedition.

What communications had you with lord Chatham after his lordship's arrival in South Beveland?—My lord Chatham came to the village of Schoore, where my quarters were, the day after his arrival in the island, upon the 22d; that was the first detailed communication of any kind I had with lord Chatham respecting the Expedition; I had not seen his lordship subsequently to his embarkation at all.

State what the communications were which you had with lord Chatham?—It was a conversation which lasted a considerable time, during which lord Chatham certainly did me the honour to ask my opinion relative to the ulterior proceedings of the army.

State what was the substance of the opinion you gave to lord Chatham?—The substance of my opinion was, that there was no probability of our success against Antwerp or the fleet.

Did you state the grounds of that opinion, and if you did, what were they?—I stated the grounds that led me to that opinion; they were in general, that the enemy was in a state of preparation which would infallibly make it necessary to bring heavy ordnance against the town of Antwerp, and to proceed, probably, by

the reduction of the lower defences, by which I understood Lillo and Liefkenshoeik. I also stated, that I conceived no effectual operation could be carried on against Antwerp, unless we were enabled to invest the town on both sides the river. That if that was in contemplation, it became necessary that the corps detached to the left bank of the river should be equal to its own support and security. That from what we had reason to know of the numbers of the enemy or his state of preparation, and considering that a considerable delay must necessarily occur in proceeding to a siege, I did not see that, with our numbers, we had the smallest probability of succeeding.

State how early you had formed that opinion?—I cannot state the precise dates. I can only say, that very early after my arrival in South Beveland, that opinion was entirely confirmed. I had, previously to that, no grounds for a positive opinion on it.

Then the Committee is to understand, that, very soon after your arrival in South Beveland, it was your opinion that you had very little chance of success against Antwerp, which opinion subsequent events confirmed?—Previous to the sailing of the Expedition, I was not sanguine in my expectation of success; but soon after my arrival in South Beveland that opinion became a positive one.

Did lord Chatham then or at any time, communicate to you any plan of operations by which it was intended to effect the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I recollect no such plan communicated by lord Chatham at all; I stated that I had seen a general Disposition for the operations of the campaign; that was a rough sketch shewn me by the quarter master general; I had no detailed conversation at all with lord Chatham previous to our sailing, and none respecting the immediate operations of Antwerp that I recollect at all.

When was it first notified to you that you were to have a command in this Expedition?—As nearly as I recollect in the latter end of June or the beginning of July; the letter of service was the first notice I had of it, which I received from the Commander in Chief's office about the end of June or the beginning of July.

Had you any personal communication with the Commander in Chief in consequence of that notification?—I had not.

Had you any communication with any

one of his Majesty's ministers subsequently to that notification?—I had not.

Was any opinion asked of you by the commander in chief, or any one of his Majesty's ministers, either in writing or verbally, previously to the sailing of the Expedition?—When I waited upon my lord Chatham at Ramsgate, he certainly, in the conversation we had, asked generally what my opinion of the Expedition was; but as I have already stated, his lordship entered into no detail with me, nor had I any opportunity of doing so with him, nor was I at all called upon to do so by the circumstances at the time.

Did you give any general opinion to lord Chatham in consequence of that request made by lord Chatham to you?—I stated, as far as I recollect, that I did not think it probable we should succeed.

Did lord Chatham make any observations thereupon?—My lord Chatham made no observations upon my opinion; I believe his lordship said that it certainly was an arduous undertaking, but that there was reason to suppose the enemy was in an extremely unprepared state; I think that was the whole that passed.

Did you make any communication of your opinion to lord Castlereagh, either verbal or written?—I certainly did not; it was not my duty to do so, nor was I at all called upon to do so.

You have stated to the Committee, that about the 24th you obtained intelligence respecting the revictment of Antwerp; among the different intelligence you received did you receive any account of buildings being near the brink of the ditch?—I recollect no such intelligence.

Was sir William Erskine under your immediate command?—He was.

Did sir William Erskine communicate to you the intelligence that he from time to time received respecting the state of the fortifications of Antwerp, Lillo, and the different places in Flanders?—Sir Wm. Erskine communicated to me all such intelligence as he received, and that intelligence he set about procuring in consequence of orders he received from me; intelligence of that kind I immediately transmitted to head quarters; it also occurred that sir Wm. Erskine on one or two occasions, whilst he transmitted the intelligence to me, transmitted it also direct to head quarters.

Had you an opportunity yourself of reconnoitering before any of our ships went up the Scheldt, the fortifications of Lillo?



—I had not, I did not judge it necessary to do it; I conceive I should have learnt nothing by so doing.

What was your information with respect to the composition and quality of the enemy's force that were assembled at Antwerp?—It was stated at first soon after our landing on South Beveland, that the enemy had few regular troops in Antwerp, that the persons employed in the dock-yard were trained to arms, did duty in the town and amounted to 6 or 7,000 men; it was also stated to me that the crews of the ships were occasionally or might be occasionally employed on the shore, but I had at that time no data to judge precisely of the number in garrison at Antwerp; it was subsequently stated in the course of the intelligence received, that the garrison was augmented, and was daily augmenting by fresh arrivals.

You stated, that, according to the information you received on the 28th of August, the amount of the enemy's force between Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom, and on both sides of the Scheldt, was 21,780 men; what proportion of this force had you reason to suppose were regular troops?—I had no means of knowing that circumstance at all exactly at the same time, the general colour of the intelligence led me to believe that the whole comprehended in that number were regular troops, many of them dépôts of the French army, many of them very young men, but regular troops in more than one instance, but particularly in that alluded to in the enumeration of the troops the corps are mentioned, but I can by no means vouch for their numbers; but the general effect of the intelligence was, that the enemy's force consisted of regular troops, many of them however dépôts of regiments in the French service, and many of them troops hastily levied.

Have you reason to believe that the force the enemy were enabled to assemble at Antwerp was a corps composed of dépôts of regiments, conscripts, and troops hastily levied, or that any considerable proportion of that force were regular regiments of the line, and in an effective and complete state of discipline?—I have no reason to suppose that that description applied to the whole of the enemy's force, but undoubtedly to a proportion of it, and perhaps those that arrived at first were completely of that description of dépôts; in many instances the corps are named whether dépôts or not.

Did you conceive that upon the whole, it was an army well or ill composed, in a military point of view?—I had not the smallest means of knowing the composition of the French army at all, beyond the intelligence which I transmitted to head quarters.

Did you receive any intelligence, that the enemy had detached a considerable proportion of the regimental workmen at the arsenal to the Danube, some time before the arrival of the English Expedition at the Scheldt?—I do not recollect receiving any such intelligence.

Was the information in detail you received during your command in South Beveland, transmitted to the quarter-master general; and is it likely to appear in the narrative of the quarter-master general?—I presume the whole of it, or at least the substance of it; all the material parts of it will undoubtedly appear.

Have you the information at present in your possession?—I have the originals here.

What was the earliest day you considered the army was assembled off Santvliet, in a state to commence operations with its necessary equipments of cavalry, artillery, stores, &c.?—I think the 24th of August, which was the date of the arrival of general Grosvenor's division; and I believe the remainder of the cavalry, the last transports which came up the Scheldt.

When did you first arrive at Bathz?—The morning of the 3d.

Can you, either by information or observation from the patrols, or other circumstances, inform the Committee what number of men might be at that time cantoned between Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp?—The information I had, as far as it depended on intelligence, I have stated to the Committee; we had no means of patrolling or making any observation whatever.

Do you conceive Bergen-op-Zoom was at that time garrisoned?—I have stated that upon the 3d of August I had reason to believe Bergen-op-Zoom was garrisoned, and meant to be defended.

Do you know of a ford that was found out not far from Bathz across the Bergen-op-*zoom* channel?—The channel of Bergen-op-*zoom* is fordable at a particular time of tide for a considerable extent near the fort of Bathz.

How soon was that channel in possession of the British fleet?—The channel became in our possession from the moment of our occupation of the fort of Bathz.

I understand you to state that the fort of Bathz was attacked twice by the flotilla of the enemy, if so, was the whole of the channel in possession of the British?—The attack of the enemy's flotilla was one by the Western Scheldt.

Could troops have passed across that ford at any time without being annoyed by any of the enemy's small craft or vessels?—No annoyance could proceed from the enemy's small craft, because the channel was nearly dry, and small craft could not lie in it at low water.

In point of fact was it practicable, at an early date after your taking possession of South Beveland, to have moved forwards in any force towards Antwerp by that ford?—The ford was practicable I believe for infantry, probably in small bodies, but I conceive never was practicable at all for any great military purpose; the cavalry and artillery could not in my opinion pass it, nor according to any opinion that I ever heard at the time.

Was any attempt made to pass it, or to take possession of the other side, or to throw up any work on the other side?—It was passed by men for the purpose of trying it, but no further attempt was made; nor was any attempt made to throw up works on the other side.

When did lord Chatham first arrive at Bathz?—I think on the 23d, head-quarters were at Crabben dyke, and his lordship was, I believe, that day at Bathz; he was I know on the 24th.

Of the 21,780 men who you have stated were garrisoned in the cantonments in the neighbourhood of Lillo, Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom, how many do you suppose that the enemy, after leaving proper garrisons in those different forts, could have brought into the field?—I have no means of knowing the distribution of the enemy's force, and cannot therefore speak with any sort of precision to that question. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

[The Witness was again called in.]

From the intelligence you received about the 10th of August, what force do you suppose the enemy would have been able to have brought into the field to meet the British army, after leaving proper garrisons in the different forts on the Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo sides of the Scheldt?—It is a subject on which I can form no idea, having no local knowledge respecting the place.

Supposing it had been practicable to

have landed a British force at Santvliet of 20,000 men and that the situation of Antwerp had been this; that close to the fortifications there had been a suburb that would have afforded a shelter for troops with a British force of 20,000 men, and carrying with them not very heavy artillery but merely 18 and 24-pounders, would it not in your opinion have been practicable to have erected batteries against the works of the place without opening regular trenches?—I am altogether unacquainted with the local circumstances of the place, at the same time I have no doubt that such a force might have reached Antwerp, and might have commenced the operation of a siege.

When the earl of Rosslyn arrived in South Beveland, did not his lordship take the command of the army in South Beveland?—He certainly did; I believe I stated that on the 9th, or 10th, my command ceased.

State whether previously to the arrival of lord Rosslyn, you received any discretionary power from the commander in chief to act in case an opening presented itself for any enterprize, the accomplishment of which might facilitate the attainment of the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I had no other instructions than those I have communicated to the Committee; comprehended in that was the collection of supplies, and means of movement for the troops; beyond that I never understood that I was to prepare for any further operations.

If you had had such discretionary powers, and supposing that the other divisions of the army, which were not exclusively directed to Walcheren, had been landed in South Beveland by the end of the first week in August, did any opening for any such enterprize present itself?—Certainly not.

Have you ever heard of an army, when acting in an inland situation, carrying heavier guns than twenty-four pounders?—I recollect none such.

You have stated that you were ordered to occupy the island of Schowen in order to cover the anchorage of the Roompot, was that order given by the commander in chief?—The order as it came to me arose, I understood, out of the circumstances of the weather at the moment, which made it probable that the greater part of the fleet would be obliged to run into the Roompot, it was therefore I believe suggested to the commander in

chief that it would be necessary to occupy certain points on the island of Schowen, and that service, which I believe had been intended to be executed by general Grosvenor's division, was for the moment assigned to me, and the mode of receiving it was by a letter from the quarter-master general, by order of the commander in chief.

You have stated that that order originated in a mistake, as the island of Schowen did not cover the anchorage of the Roompot; how long did that mistake prevail?—I have stated in a former part of my evidence, that upon sir Richard Keat's reaching the anchorage of the Roompot, it was found and reported by him, and by me to the two commanders in chief, that we were not within less than four or five miles of the island of Schowen, and that therefore the security of the anchorage did not depend at all upon the island of Schowen.

When you entered Bathz did you consider it in a state to have held out against your attack for any time?—I conceive it would have held out against any means I had for a certain time no doubt.

What time do you think it might have held out, with the garrison that had abandoned it?—I had only field-pieces; I had one or two howitzers, and three or four royal mortars; I therefore conceive the garrison of Bathz might have held out several days, if it had been defended. I had no information as to the extent of the garrison.

Do you recollect the number of guns in the fort of Bathz which commanded the channel of the West Scheldt?—The whole of the guns mounted in the fort, with the exception of one or two howitzers, were upon that face, and commanded the Scheldt, the exact number I do not know; at this period, I believe 14 or 15 24 pounders.

Did those guns command that channel which the ships must have passed to have gone to Santvliet?—The fort of Bathz completely commands the navigation of the West Scheldt.

From the nature of the work, how long was it likely to hold out if you had adequate means of attacking it, battering-cannon and mortars, &c.?—I believe a very short time, indeed probably, a very few hours of bombardment.

If the fleet had made its way up the West Scheldt, would there have been any difficulty in landing the adequate means for the immediate reduction of that fort?

—I should doubt whether the means could have been landed immediately in the neighbourhood of Bathz, but certainly within a very few miles; we should have had the means of attacking the fort from the enemy's batteries at Warden as soon as the guns were rendered fit for service.

Do you conceive that the possession of the fortress of Flushing, and the island of Walcheren, was necessary to the further success of the Expedition?—I conceive indispensable.

Was the defence made by the fortress of Flushing greater or less than there was reason to expect, considering the state of preparation in which the enemy were found to be?—I have no knowledge whatever of the fortress of Flushing; I was ashore there at the termination of the service for a very few hours; I passed merely through the town, and had no opportunity of seeing or knowing what the force of the enemy were, nor have I any data to enable me to answer that question.

Do you conceive that the time occupied in taking Flushing, and the rest of the island of Walcheren, was such as to enable the enemy to make considerable preparations for the defence of Antwerp?—Undoubtedly I conceive so.

Is it with a view to the advance against Antwerp, or to the retreat, that you conceive the possession of Walcheren was indispensable?—In both points of view.

Do you conceive that after the taking of Flushing, and at the period when the army was ready to advance against Antwerp, the further success of the Expedition had become hopeless?—I do; I believe I have stated as much.

Then the Committee is to understand, that the taking of Flushing was indispensable, and that after it was taken it was impossible to execute what remained of the project?—That is the opinion I have formed; at the same time, I never limited that opinion to the period of the termination of the siege of Flushing.

Do you conceive that the operation against Antwerp, and the operation against Flushing, could have gone on together?—I conceive, certainly not with the force we had.

Can you recollect how many guns with travelling carriages were found in Bathz and Warden, which might have been used in the ulterior operations?—I believe there were twelve 24-pounders in the battery at Warden, I believe all on travelling carriages; with respect to the

guns at Bathz, I believe they were all on travelling carriages, and I believe I have stated them at 14 or 15.

Do you think that the fleet and the transports could have got up to Bathz, if we had not got possession of the shores of South Beveland?—I conceive not, the transports certainly not; they might have got up by taking temporary possession of batteries on particular points.

Are you of opinion that Antwerp could have been carried by a *coup de main*?—I certainly never had any such impression, knowing nothing of the works; however, it never struck me as a possible case at all.

Was it ever communicated to you by lord Chatham, or any other person in authority, what was the plan that was proposed for the attack of Antwerp?—I never had any communication of any detailed plan for the attack on Antwerp beyond what is mentioned in the sketch of the Disposition, which I have already stated I saw previously to the sailing of the fleet from the Downs.

Did that sketch contain any particulars relative to the proceedings for the attack on Antwerp?—As far as I recollect of it, it was stated that the troops, being landed at Santvliet, might proceed by rapid marches, accompanied by their field-pieces, against Antwerp.

Then the only plan of attack you knew proposed as against Antwerp, was by a rapid march of the troops from Santvliet accompanied by their field-pieces?—That was the only plan that was communicated to me.

Had you any further communications with Lord Chatham on the subject of the proposed attack on Antwerp subsequent to the 22d of August?—I was present as one with several others at head quarters at Bathz upon three occasions, the 25th, the 26, and 27th of August, where the subject was discussed, where no detailed plan of operations was entered into, but where the general subject of the ulterior operations of the army was discussed; two of these were councils of war, and one a conversation at the commander in chief's quarters, at which I was present.

Did you ever state to lord Chatham, by writing or otherwise, any detail of your own opinion with respect to the difficulties of proceeding against Antwerp, after lord Chatham arrived in South Beveland?—I recollect no other communications to the commander in chief than those I have

alluded to, those of the 22d, 25th, 26th and 27th. I stated on the 23d, I think, in a private communication to the quarter-master general, which he was at liberty to make such use of as he saw fit, my more detailed opinion in writing.

Have you a copy of that detailed opinion of yours delivered on the 23d to the quarter-master general?—I considered that communication to the quarter-master general to be a confidential communication to him, wishing to put him in possession of my sentiments; it is not an official paper, but I have no objection whatever to produce it: I have it not now with me.

Would the march of the army from Santvliet to Antwerp have been secure without cavalry?—I conceive certainly not; but I beg to be understood, that is founded only on general principles, and not on any knowledge of the country, for I had none.

When did cavalry and artillery horses arrive first at Bathz, and in what number?—I apprehend the first arrivals must have been between the 20th and 25th, but I have no returns or reports of the number, and had no means of knowing them.

When were the batteries on South Beveland first taken possession of?—I believe I have stated that the enemy abandoned the batteries on the 1st, and we occupied them on the 2d.

When was the channel by the Borselen along the coast of Beveland first sounded?—I cannot say.

In the rough sketch of operations shewn to you, was the previous capture of Lillo considered necessary to the advance against Antwerp?—I do not recollect that it was stated as necessary; whether it was alluded to or not, I have not at this moment a perfect recollection.

In that same sketch was the possible inundation of the country before Lillo taken into the account?—As far as I recollect, the practicability and the probability that the enemy would resort to that measure was generally noticed, whether with respect to Lillo or not, I do not at this moment recollect.

In what you stated concerning the march from Santvliet to Antwerp, did you take into the account the probability of the country being inundated?—I certainly did; the march to Antwerp of a considerable corps would have comprehended the march of one column probably

(Y)

by the higher country that was not affected by the inundation, in which cavalry would have acted; besides that, the movement of an army without cavalry is always a crippled movement.

Supposing our army to have possessed itself of the batteries of Cadsand, might not such part of the armament as was not wanted for the attack of Flushing have passed up the West Scheldt without waiting for the conquest of the island of Walcheren?—I apprehend that to answer that question requires more naval information and more local information respecting the place of Flushing itself, than I actually possess: it would have been extremely difficult at all events I apprehend.

Supposing the cavalry and ordnance horses had been landed from the Slough on South Beveland, what length of time would it have taken to have moved them from Bathz?—The distance from the Slough to Bathz is from 30 to 35 miles, it is therefore a long march, which would take a day and a half.

Supposing there had been any buildings on the brink of the ditch at Antwerp, as described in a former question, would not the governor of that fortress have thought it proper to destroy those houses or any other obstruction that interfered with the defence of the place?—Probably he would.

Does the return that specifies 21,780 men comprehend the armed men of the Dock-yards of Antwerp and the seamen of the fleet, who have been stated to have been trained or prepared for the defence of the place, or does it include such troops as may have been at Cadsand at the time?—I conceive it includes neither the Dock-yard people nor those in Cadsand, but those in cantonments on both sides of the Scheldt, and those in Antwerp. [The witness withdrew.]

Lieutenant General the Earl of ROSSLYN, called in, and examined.

What were your lordship's instructions when you sailed on the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I had no instructions on sailing with the Expedition to the Scheldt, except to embark with my division; I knew my division was to sail one day later than the division that preceded it.

Will your lordship state what were the operations of that part of the army which was under your lordship's immediate command?—We sailed on the 30th of July. On the 31st we arrived within sight of the

island of Walcheren, and were directed by a frigate into the Roompot and anchored off Veer Gaat; the troops remained on board ship till the 9th, when they were landed in South Beveland. I remained in the command of the island of South Beveland from that time until the evacuation, which took place on the 4th of September; one part of my division was however landed from the transports, to reinforce the troops before Flushing; one brigade of infantry landed with me in South Beveland; the cavalry remained on board ship during the whole time, with the exception of the 9th regiment, which more properly belonged to the corps under sir Eyre Coote.

As your lordship was in South Beveland, had you any opportunity of procuring any intelligence of the state of the enemy in those parts, or any of the adjacent parts, other than what is published in the journal of the army?—I had; the greater part of the intelligence I had an opportunity of procuring, was transmitted to the Quartermaster General in the regular official course; and I apprehend that the substance of all so transmitted will appear upon the journal. I had besides other opportunities; the substance of one communication in particular, being of a more confidential nature, was communicated directly from myself to lord Chatham. I had also an opportunity, (whether it appears upon the journal or not I am not quite certain, but part of it was stated in conversation, and afterwards repeated in conversation) of learning the state of Bergen-op-Zoom at an early period, but that was before I went into South Beveland.

Will your lordship state the substance of that information, together with its date?—The intelligence was received on the 13th of August, the substance of it was collected between the 9th and the 13th. The person giving the information was upon the land of Tolen, and saw the town, and that the trees were cut down and people at work around the place, and every preparation made for defence; saw in Tolen a flotilla of 36 gun-boats; on the same day entered Bergen-op-Zoom, heard that there were in garrison upwards of 3,000 men, that the inhabitants were also embodied for the defence of the place; went from thence to Rosendahl. The substance of his information did, in all its material points, tally with other information received on the same day from two

or three sources, which was transmitted, some by the persons themselves being sent to head-quarters the same day, and other parts by communications from sir John Hope and sir William Erskine, which were transmitted by me. At Rosendahl there was a regiment of between 7 and 800 men; it was not possible to examine the villages between Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp fully, but was informed that all the houses in that line were full of troops, and strong patrols along the dykes, and picquets behind them; there were considerable numbers of gens d'armes riding about; did not understand that the cavalry were very numerous. On coming to the suburbs of Antwerp was informed that there were two regiments in the citadel, and that they were at work to strengthen fort Lillo; could not approach fort Lillo, or examine the country between Antwerp and that fort, but understood it was full of troops; was told that there were between Antwerp and Santvliet about 8,000 men; was informed that they were forming camps between Bergen-op-Zoom and Santvliet, to receive troops from Bergen-op-Zoom; heard that the workmen belonging to the arsenal at Antwerp, amounting to about 6,000 men, were trained to carry arms for the defence of the town, and that they marched to work with drums and fifes like regular soldiers. Saw but one side of Antwerp, and on that the wall was entire and surrounded with a wet ditch, but did not see any guns mounted; did not understand that they expected any attack upon Antwerp itself; heard that a large force was gone to Cadsand, some said 6,000 men, some 10,000 men. Returned by Breda, where he found two regiments in garrison; went through Williamstadt, where there were 200 men in garrison, and crossed through Flackee near Duiveland, and saw between that and Flackee a small flotilla of a brig and 10 gun-boats; heard that at Goree there had been 400 men in garrison, who went up to Breda; saw a great number of large ships at Antwerp, and was told there were eight or nine building, and an immense stock of wood for building. Only four ships of the line were then said to be come up, but the rest were expected. The magazine for timber was stated to be a large church, or near a large church; I should rather think near a large church, immediately under the citadel of Antwerp.

The whole of this intelligence refers to

the dates between the 9th and 13th?—All between the 9th and 13th.

Did your lordship conceive this intelligence came from a quarter entitled to your perfect confidence?—Perfectly.

Will your lordship state the substance of the information you received respecting Bergen-op-Zoom, previous to your arrival in South Beveland?—It was reported to me by one person who heard it from two quarters, the one that the regiment of cuirassiers, the other calling it a regiment of dragoons, had passed into Bergen-op-Zoom on the 1st of August, and both concurring that there was one battalion and the dépôt of two others in Bergen-op-Zoom at that period.

Did your lordship at any other period receive any confidential intelligence besides that you have stated?—I think none.

Not subsequently to the 13th of August?—I think all received subsequently was transmitted directly to general Brownrigg, and I believe it to be upon the journal.

Was your lordship consulted with, either by government or the commander in chief, respecting the objects of the Expedition previously to its sailing?—No.

Had your lordship any communication upon that subject with lord Chatham during the operations of the army in Beveland?—I had communication from lord Chatham of the general intention, and the general outline of the plan before I went, and I had communications whenever I had any opportunity of seeing lord Chatham during the course of the service.

From those previous communications, what did your lordship understand to be the general outline of the plan?—I understood that the corps embarked at Portsmouth under sir Eyre Coote, was destined for the service of Walcheren and the reduction of Flushing; that the rest of the military force, to act immediately under lord Chatham himself, was intended for the prosecution of the ulterior operation, particularly landing on the Continent if necessary, but of getting possession of or destroying the fleet: with a view to that, I understood before we left Deal, that a part of a division was destined to land in Cadsand and to occupy the batteries, in order that the transports might pass up the Weiling passage; that sir John Hope with his division, with sir Richard Keats, was to pass into the East Scheldt to make a landing on South Beve-

land, and that my division and that of general Grosvenor, were destined to go forward up the Scheldt to the place of landing; that the division to be landed in Cadsand was for the purpose of destroying the batteries at Breskins, and occupying the coast time enough for the passage of the ships; and that afterwards they were to embark and follow the remainder of the army.

Can your lordship state what was the plan of operations the remainder of the army were intended to pursue?—I understood that the general purpose to which the remainder of the army was destined, was to land somewhere at or near Santvliet, and to proceed to Antwerp for the purpose of securing or destroying the fleet.

Did your lordship, then, conceive the ulterior object of the Expedition was confined to the destruction of the fleet, or was to be extended to the arsenals and docks at Antwerp?—Certainly, to the arsenals and docks too.

Can your lordship state by what mode of operation it was proposed to effect the destruction of the arsenals and docks at Antwerp?—I was not acquainted with any details of the plan for future operations; I knew that a considerable number of mortars and howitzers and some guns were embarked under the title of the second operation, which I understood to be destined to go up the Scheldt with the army.

Can your lordship state whether these formed any part of the train used in the siege of Flushing, or were a separate train destined for a distinct office?—They formed no part of the train prepared for the siege of Flushing, but I am not competent to say whether any part of them were afterwards landed; they were embarked separately, and there were instructions given to keep the transports with those guns and stores on board separate.

Does your lordship know whether it was intended that Antwerp should have been attacked by the army alone, or whether it was to have been an operation combined with the navy?—I apprehend that that must have entirely depended on circumstances; there could be no doubt of every possible co-operation on the part of the navy to forward any purpose that might be undertaken; but unless the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik could have been previously reduced, I am not aware how the navy could have co-operated in an attack upon Antwerp itself.

Does your lordship know whether it was intended to attack Antwerp by assault, by bombardment, or by a regular siege?—I do not, but I apprehend not by regular siege.

In what mode did your lordship understand it was to be attacked?—I know not what intelligence the government or the commander in chief of the force might have possessed with respect to the state of Antwerp. The mode of attack must have depended upon the condition in which it was found. I answered, it could not be by siege, because the preparations made for it were not, I conceive, equal to the regular siege of the town and citadel.

Supposing the force intended for the attack of Antwerp landed at Santvliet, what time does your lordship think must have elapsed before the whole of that force, with such train as was embarked for that purpose, could have been brought to Antwerp, and preparations made to commence the bombardment of Antwerp?—I have some difficulty in answering the question, because it must depend upon a variety of things of which I am not sufficiently informed; in the first place, much upon the roads; in the next place much upon the quantity of horses for draught that we might have been able to have assembled there; but, believing that we had from about 900 to 1000 horses embarked for the artillery, and counting upon such assistance as in all probability the island of South Beveland might have furnished, deducting however the number of horses that must have been necessary for the service of the commissariat department, I should think that after the landing of the infantry and cavalry were completed at Santvliet, it would have been a very favourable calculation if we could have hoped to open the bombardment in less than seven days. I apprehend, that the landing must have taken two days at the least previous to that, but in that calculation I am certainly assuming every possible circumstance to be the most favourable that one could wish or almost imagine; but the Committee must see, that is a calculation which must necessarily be in its nature very loose without precise and particular knowledge upon the spot. I never was in Antwerp, nor upon the road from Antwerp to Santvliet, and much must depend also upon the state of the beach and the facility of landing, because the difficulty of landing guns and mortars, and the heavy stores belonging to

them upon a beach, depends in the first place very much upon the nature of the ground itself, and very much upon the weather that may occur at the time, so that any calculation made upon that subject must be liable to much uncertainty.

Supposing the army to be arrived at Antwerp, Lillo and Bergen-op-Zoom remaining in the hands of the French, by what means was that army to be provisioned?—From the beach at Santvliet.

Would not that have rendered it necessary to have detached a strong corps to mask Bergen-op-Zoom, and another strong corps to mask Lillo, considering that the communication to the river would always have been open to that force?—It would undoubtedly have been necessary to leave a strong corps at Santvliet for the purpose of throwing up works both to cover the landing of supplies and to insure the possibility of retreat. It would have been necessary also that Bergen-op-Zoom should have been masked with a force sufficient to controul the garrison therein, and in like manner a corps must have been posted to mask Lillo; these three corps, however, might have been put in situations to afford occasionally mutual support to each other.

Does your lordship know according to the original plan what was the amount of the force that was destined to the ulterior operations by Santvliet?—Including the reserve under sir John Hope, a part of which or of some other corps must have been left in South Beveland, the whole force would have amounted to about 23,000 rank and file, exclusive of the waggon train and the gunner drivers, as nearly as I recollect, they consisted of sir John Hope's, gen. Grosvenor's, lord Huntley's division, and my own.

Knowing what your lordship does of the enemy's force, do you conceive that at any time subsequent to your arrival at South Beveland, the force you have stated would have been sufficient to have masked Lillo and Bergen-op-Zoom, to have secured the convoys, and to have attacked Antwerp with the least probability of success?—I do not.

Does your lordship know in what time, on the forming of the original plan, it was calculated that the Expedition probably would be enabled to land at Santvliet?—I cannot answer that question. I do not think that under any circumstances, however favourable, we could have arrived at Santvliet sooner than the 3d or 4th of Aug.

The division in which I was arrived off the coast on the 31st, and I think if the passage had been open, and wind and weather favourable, we could not well have entered before the morning of the 1st. I am not competent to speak to the time which it might have taken to proceed up the river, but allowing for that three days, we might under those circumstances, possibly have reached it by the 3d or 4th.

Supposing that part of the army destined for the ulterior operations had arrived off Santvliet on the 3d or 4th, does your lordship, knowing what has come to your knowledge of the state of the enemy, conceive there would have been any probability of their succeeding against Antwerp?—I do not believe, from the information I have had respecting the state of the town, that it would have been possible, even then, to have taken the town without heavy artillery.

Supposing the army had advanced against Antwerp and had been repulsed, without having secured Lillo or Bergen-op-Zoom, does your lordship think they would have been exposed to imminent risk in their retreat?—To very considerable hazard, more particularly if they had not had time to throw up works to cover their re-embarkation.

Adverting to the question and answer last but one, supposing the heavy artillery with which that part of the Expedition was provided had been brought up, and the time given to the enemy which your lordship thinks would have been necessary to open the works against Antwerp; does your lordship think there would have been any probability of success against Antwerp?—The answer to that question involves so many considerations, that I must offer my opinion with great humility; but most certainly, if the Committee call upon me for my opinion, I should say there was no probability of success at that time.

In any conversation with lord Chatham before the sailing of the Expedition, or in South Beveland, did your lordship communicate your doubts respecting the practicability of the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I communicated my opinion to lord Chatham to the effect now stated, when I saw his lordship in South Beveland on the 22d or 23d of August.

Does not your lordship think that the whole of the Expedition was rather too late to answer any material purpose?—I am not



prepared to answer that question, for I do not know at what time it would have answered the purpose.

Was the information your lordship received respecting the situation of Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom, and the different places you have detailed to the Committee, given to your lordship personally or in writing?—Personally.

Did your lordship make particular enquiry respecting the situation of Antwerp, particularly respecting the situation of the suburbs, whether they were near the fortifications so as to afford shelter for the troops to attack that place?—I did not.

Did your lordship receive any information on that subject through any other channel?—I think not.

Does your lordship know particularly the situation of the river front of Antwerp, whether it was fortified or not?—I do not.

Does not your lordship think that the whole of the Expedition was too late to answer any material purpose?—As far as I understand the question, I have already answered, that I do not know the time when it would have answered the purpose.

Will your lordship state, if you are acquainted with it, what was the plan of operations by which it was proposed to get possession of or to destroy the fleet of the enemy?—It must necessarily have depended upon the position in which they were found.

Supposing them to be stationed, as in fact they were, at any point between Fort Lillo and Antwerp, does your lordship know of any plan of operation by which it was proposed to destroy them?—I know of no plan fixed for it, and I can conceive of no plan that must not necessarily have inferred the previous possession of Antwerp, supposing the ships to be, as in fact they were, stationed in the river under the town and the citadel.

Supposing the fleet not to have moved up to Antwerp, or to have moved up above Antwerp, in what way would the possession of Antwerp alone have effected the destruction of the fleet?—If the fleet had not moved up to Antwerp, then undoubtedly, by the possession of the banks of the river, the ships might have been destroyed by fire from the banks.

Mentioning the banks of the river, does your lordship include the left bank as well as the right?—Both would have been desirable, but undoubtedly, if you had had possession of one bank of the river and the ships had been stationary there,

they might have been destroyed from either bank.

Could it be said that the British had possession of both banks of the river without the possession of the forts of Lillo, and Liefkenshoeik?—Certainly not.

Has your lordship stated any plan of operations by which it was proposed to take possession of those two forts?—I have not, and I do not know whether it was intended to commence with the reduction of Lillo, or to have passed it and proceeded to Antwerp; I rather suppose that must have depended upon circumstances to be judged of at the time.

At any time after the communication of the object of that Expedition to your lordship, were you of opinion that that object was attainable?—I was not in possession of the intelligence upon which the Expedition was ordered, and without some knowledge of the force of the enemy, not only in the countries against which the Expedition was immediately directed, but in all the surrounding districts, it was not possible to form a decided opinion upon that subject.

[His lordship withdrew.—The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 11.

*Joris, 32<sup>e</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

Lieutenant General the Right Hon. the  
Earl of CHATHAM, called in.—Examined by the Committee.

At what time was it first proposed to your lordship to take the command of the army destined for the Scheldt?—I do not recollect the exact time; I believe in the beginning of June.

By whom was that proposition first made to your lordship?—By the secretary of state for the war department.

Will your lordship state what plan was given to your lordship at that time, or was suggested relative to the operations intended to be entrusted to your lordship's command?—There was no particular plan stated to me.

It is stated in your lordship's narrative that a change had taken place in the original plan, in consequence of the military opinions; will your lordship state what

was the original plan?—The original plan alluded to will be shewn to the House by reading the opinion of sir David Dundas and the other general officers, which was taken upon that plan; that was, the idea of landing at Ostend, and proceeding from thence to Antwerp.

Had that plan met with your lordship's approbation?—It was not particularly submitted for my approbation.

Before your lordship sailed, will your lordship have the goodness to state what was the plan of operations you intended to be adopted?—I conceive that the plan intended to be adopted is described very much in the instructions; certainly, I had many communications upon the subject with his Majesty's ministers as to the details. The plan seems to be described in the instructions.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what was the result of the communications which you had upon the subject of the detail of operations with his Majesty's ministers?

[The Chairman informed the Earl of Chatham, that it was not necessary for his Lordship to answer any question which he might be of opinion might tend to inculcate or criminate himself, either as one of his Majesty's confidential advisers or as Commander in Chief of the late Expedition to the Scheldt.]

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what was the result of the communications which you had upon the subject of the detail of operations with his Majesty's ministers?—I really do not quite understand that question.

What were the verbal instructions under which your lordship acted?—I did not act under any verbal instructions; there were many explanatory of the other instructions of the general plan; the communications I had with the secretary of state were on the subject of carrying into effect the object of the instructions.

Had your lordship any written instructions as to the mode in which the objects of the Expedition were proposed to be accomplished?—I had no other instructions than those which are before the House; of course I mean the instructions to myself under the sign manual, and those to the admiral, which were also communicated to me.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what was the substance of the

verbal explanations, by which you understood how you were to carry your own instructions into effect?—I do not very well know how to answer that; they were rather comments probably, on the instructions, and conversations upon the manner of carrying them into effect.

The instructions under the sign manual appear merely to state what were the objects of the Expedition, I wish to know by what plan it was expected those objects were to be attained; can your lordship state the substance of any instructions, written or verbal, by which you were put in possession of the intentions of his Majesty's ministers upon that subject?—I think the naval instructions, in a great measure, put me into possession of the general plan.

Will your lordship state, by what mode of operations it was intended to get possession of or destroy the enemy's fleet, and the arsenals at Antwerp?—I conceive that was intended to be done, by landing such part of the army as was not engaged in the siege of Flushing, and employed in the reduction of Walcheren, as soon as possible at Santvliet, and to proceed against Antwerp according to circumstances, which could not be distinctly known until our arrival there, but must depend upon intelligence as circumstances arose.

Did your lordship understand, that to carry that plan into effect, it was intended to obtain possession of the town and the citadel of Antwerp?—Not absolutely; it might have been attained possibly without obtaining possession of Antwerp and the citadel; but probably could not be attained without obtaining possession of one of them, certainly.

At what time was it your lordship formed the opinion which you afterwards expressed, that those objects could not be accomplished without taking possession of the citadel as well as the town of Antwerp?—I am not perfectly sure that I stated such an opinion; I suppose that it is meant by that, as part of the plan; I did not conceive it was necessary as part of the original plan that we should gain possession both of the citadel and the town of Antwerp, for the purpose of carrying the objects into effect; certainly, at a late period, I knew it was perfectly impossible without the possession of both, to have done any thing; I understand the question to be pointed to the plan, whether it was the original plan.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state at what time it was you were convinced that the possession of both would be necessary for the accomplishment of those objects?—I cannot exactly say when I first formed that opinion, but I certainly entertained that opinion at the time that the armament was assembled at Bathz.

The Committee is to understand that was not the opinion which had been entertained by his Majesty's government, when the armament sailed from this country?—I do not know that such an opinion was entertained: I believe not.

Was not your lordship made completely acquainted with what were the opinions and the intentions of his majesty's government, before you sailed from this country? I certainly conceived I was.

Then your lordship conceived that at that time, it was not conceived necessary that you should obtain possession of the citadel of Antwerp?—I have not stated that; I stated merely that it was not conceived, as I understood, necessary by his majesty's government, that in order to accomplish the purpose of the destruction of the French fleet, the British army should be in possession both of the citadel and the town of Antwerp.

Was it at that time conceived that if your lordship obtained possession of the town without the citadel, you would be able to destroy the fleet and the arsenal at Antwerp?—That must have depended entirely on the situation of the fleet and of the arsenals at Antwerp.

Is the Committee to understand that your lordship was sent to attack the arsenals and docks at Antwerp, without being apprized of what was their situation?—I was not distinctly apprized of the situation of the docks, nor do I know that there were any docks at Antwerp; there are a great many ships building, but I always understood they were building upon slips and not in docks.

Is the Committee to understand that your lordship was sent to attack the arsenals and slips at Antwerp without being apprized what was their situation?—I did not exactly know, nor do I apprehend it was very material to the purpose of the Expedition, in what part of the town they were, unless they were under protection of the guns of the citadel.

What circumstances, that afterwards came to the knowledge of your lordship, induced you to form the opinion that the

possession of the citadel would be necessary for the accomplishment of those objects?—I had rather reason to believe, but I never knew it with perfect certainty, that the principal naval establishments were upon the new ground between the town and the citadel; but what I particularly alluded to in treating the possession of the citadel as necessary at the latter part of the time I was there, was, that the whole of the French fleet had retired as high as the citadel, and were under the protection of the guns, and that many of them had passed beyond the citadel.

Did your lordship know before you left England whether the arsenal was completely commanded by the guns of the citadel?—I believe I have said, I had no distinct knowledge before I left England where the arsenals were.

Did your lordship afterwards understand that they were completely commanded by the guns of the citadel?—I had different accounts; some intelligence stated, that many of the ships building were in that situation; others, that they were in the lower part of the town; I do not think that I had any very correct intelligence upon that subject.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state, whether, at any time, any plan was concerted for the attack on Antwerp?—No plan in detail was ever concerted for the attack on Antwerp: It must have depended entirely on circumstances after we had landed upon the continent.

Previously to your lordship's sailing, were you acquainted with the situation of Antwerp, and the strength of its fortifications?—I had only a general knowledge of it.

What was that general knowledge?—From having seen several plans in military books of the town and citadel of Antwerp; I had no particular plan put into my hands of its existing state at that moment.

By what mode was it intended to proceed against Antwerp from Santvliet?—That would have been entirely regulated by circumstances; very much by the period at which we arrived there; but very much by circumstances of intelligence after our arrival, of the strength of the enemy, and what knowledge we should obtain of the actual state of the place.

Was there, at any time during your lordship's operations in Zealand, any plan devised for the attack upon Antwerp?—For the reasons I have already

stated there was none; we never landed upon the continent.

When your lordship sailed, did you understand that the operation against Antwerp was to be conducted solely by land, or was to be a combined military and naval operation?—I think that that must entirely have depended upon circumstances, whether it would have been most advantageous to have made the preliminary sieges of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, which was necessary in order to admit the full co-operation of the navy, or whether it would have been undertaken by the army, with a partial co-operation only of the navy, which they could have afforded without the capture of those forts.

Previously to your lordship's sailing, were you acquainted with the state of Lillo?—I had no other knowledge distinctly of the state of Lillo but what the information and intelligence already before the House will state; I had no particular information upon the subject.

Previously to your lordship's sailing, were you acquainted with the state of Liefkenshoeik?—I was not.

Was it not afterwards your lordship's opinion, that the ulterior objects of the Expedition could not have been accomplished without being in possession of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik?—Certainly it was.

Is the Committee to understand, that the opinion of your lordship when the army was assembled at Bathz was, that those ulterior objects could not have been accomplished without the possession of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, of the town of Antwerp, and of the citadel of Antwerp?—In a great measure it was; I am not perfectly sure, but I believe they could not have been accomplished without the possession of all. I ought to add, that I believe it could not well have been done without the possession of one or two other forts that were between Lillo and Antwerp, particularly fort Frederick Henry, and another battery, which, I believe, was erected before that time.

Was your lordship's opinion, that the possession of the Tête de Flandre, opposite to Antwerp, would have been necessary to the accomplishment of those objects?—Not absolutely; but I apprehend, that if the town of Antwerp, and the citadel of Antwerp had been got possession of at that time, it could only have been by a siege, and I apprehend, in order to have performed the siege successfully,

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we must have been in possession of both banks of the river; that the place must have been completely invested, and probably we should have had possession of the Tête de Flandre; but if we were in possession of the town and citadel without that, it was not necessary to have possessed that to obtain possession of the enemy's fleet.

Your lordship having stated in your dispatch of the 29th of August, that Antwerp was found to be in a state of defence very different from what had been represented before the sailing of the Expedition, will your lordship state in what that difference consisted?—I understood that the works at Antwerp had been repaired, and were in a good state of defence; that guns were mounted on the ramparts, and that water had been let into the ditch.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what was the state in which Antwerp had been reported to be before your lordship sailed?—I believe that is stated particularly in the intelligence which is before the House. I have no other information as to its state but that information.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what was the substance of the reports alluded to by your lordship in that dispatch, of the state of Antwerp previously to your sailing?—I understood from many quarters it was reported, that the works were in a very bad state; that there were no guns mounted on the ramparts; and that particularly on the lower end of the town the furthest removed from the citadel, the works were in a very bad state; that was the general statement.

Was your lordship instructed by government to rely upon the accuracy of that information?—I conceive that government relied upon that information in all probability in sending the Expedition. I do not perfectly understand what is meant by my being instructed to rely upon it; of course I endeavoured to obtain all the information I could when I arrived.

Did your lordship understand that that was information upon which you might rely in adopting the operations that were necessary to accomplish the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I believe reliance was placed by his Majesty's government on that information.

From that information, was your lordship induced to think that Antwerp could

(Z)

be taken without the operations of a siege?—If that information had been true to its fullest extent, and if many other favourable combinations had also taken place at the same time, it is possible that it might have been taken without a siege.

What favourable combinations does your lordship allude to?—I mean particularly the absence of the greatest part of the military force, as represented; I mean also, if it had been possible for the armament to have arrived in as short a time as it had been stated to be possible at its destination.

What was the time in which your lordship was taught to believe that the armament might probably have arrived at Santvliet?—As I have stated, with a combination of all favourable circumstances, I had understood it might arrive certainly within forty-eight hours after our making the island of Walcheren.

By making the island of Walcheren, does your lordship include landing and taking possession of any of the batteries, or merely arriving off the coast of Walcheren?—I should say, arriving off the coast under the most favourable circumstances.

From whom did your lordship derive that opinion?—I heard that stated I think by different officers in conversing on it, I think it is in some of the plans that are submitted to the House; I rather think it is alluded to; by the most favourable circumstances is meant that the wind was perfectly fair, and the weather favourable; I conceive also that it is implied under the most favourable circumstances, that the batteries of Cadsand would have been got possession of without any difficulty.

Had your lordship any distinct official communication from the Admiralty respecting the time at which the Expedition might hope to arrive at Santvliet?—I had not.

What was the nature of the distinct official Opinion from the lords of the admiralty, the communication of which is mentioned in your lordship's Narrative?—I never saw that Opinion but once, but to the best of my recollection that Opinion went principally to state that there would be no difficulty in an armament of that size going up the Scheldt, and that there would be no difficulty in landing the army on either side of the Scheldt; that I take to be a public paper, which I suppose is before the House with the other information.

By whom was that Opinion communicated to your lordship?—I remember seeing it, it was communicated to me by the secretary of state.

By which of the secretaries of state?—The secretary of state for the war department.

By whom was that Opinion signed?—It was signed, I think, by the three naval lords of the admiralty.

The signature of the first lord of the admiralty then was not affixed to that paper?—It was not; it was given as a professional Opinion.

From that Opinion, did your lordship understand that the Expedition could arrive at Santvliet within forty-eight hours after making Walcheren?—No, certainly not; there was no mention whatever as to time.

From whom did your lordship obtain that Opinion?—I think it was in different communications that passed I believe at the secretary of state's, at which, different officers were present.

Can your lordship state what officers were present, and whether their opinions were given in writing?—Their opinions were not given in writing; I am not perfectly sure at this moment whether sir Richard Strachan was there or not, but I recollect perfectly sir Home Popham being there, and having much conversation with him respecting the time of proceeding up the river.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state on what day you yourself, when you sailed, thought it probable you might disembark your army at Santvliet?—That must depend so entirely on naval occurrences, it was impossible I should form any opinion; if it was under the most favourable circumstances, probably in about three or four days.

Three or four days after sailing from Deal, or after the arrival at Walcheren?—Under the most favourable circumstances possible, in about four days after sailing from the Downs; possibly, but not very probably.

Supposing the armament to have arrived at Santvliet in four days after sailing from the Downs, what time did your lordship calculate would have been necessary to have landed the armament, to have taken a position before Antwerp, and to have erected mortar batteries and opened fire against the town?—I do not know that that would have been the course of operation. I can state in what time probably

the army would have been landed ; what would have been the subsequent operation I do not at present know ; it must depend on circumstances.

Had your lordship formed no calculation when you sailed of the probable time you might arrive with your army at Antwerp after landing at Santvliet ?—I had certainly considered very fully various operations which might be to take place, but I have already said that very possibly the preliminary sieges of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik might take place before any attack upon Antwerp ; possibly they might not.

What time does your lordship imagine the preliminary sieges of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik might have required, supposing your lordship to have arrived within four days at Santvliet ?—It is rather difficult to answer that question, because I was not perfectly informed what was the state of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, or what garrison was in Lillo or Liefkenshoeik, or what was the nature of the communications.

Were the military Opinions delivered to the commander in chief, and by him to government, submitted to your lordship, and at what time ?—I really do not recollect at what time ; I saw them probably at the time they were first delivered.

Had your lordship any communication with the general officers who had given their opinions on the subject of these opinions ?—I had some.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state with which officers, and what was the nature of those conversations ?—The nature of the conversations were very general ; they were not submitted to me for opinion ; the papers were submitted to the cabinet. I had general conversations, from being acquainted with all the officers, but nothing more.

Did your lordship ask for any information respecting the difficulties of the enterprize which are alluded to in those Opinions ?—I do not perfectly understand the question.

Had your lordship any conversation with sir David Dundas upon the subject of his opinion ?—I had some general conversation with him.

From the result of those conversations did your lordship understand that sir David Dundas had changed his opinion with respect to the difficulties that he apprehended would attend the execution of this project ?—I had no reason to suppose that he had changed any opinions he might have given.

Did your lordship require any more detailed explanation of the general difficulties stated in those Opinions to attend this operation ?—I do not know what particular difficulties are alluded to ; the opinion of sir David Dundas I understood to be directed to the preference between two different modes of operation.

Does your lordship recollect the expression in colonel Gordon's Opinion, that the Expedition by the Scheldt, though preferable to the other modes, was a desperate enterprize ?—I do not recollect that expression. I do not recollect particularly colonel Gordon's report at this moment.

Your lordship states in your Narrative, that you yourself entertained great doubts of the practicability of this enterprize until you had seen the opinions of the admiralty ; will your lordship state upon what those doubts were grounded ?—They were doubts of a general nature. I had always understood that the moving a very large fleet upon the enemy's coast, and to enter a navigation that was not perfectly known, was a very difficult enterprize, and I had great doubts whether it was probable they would arrive within a very short time at their destination ; those doubts were removed by the Opinion given by the lords of the Admiralty. I had also entertained considerable doubts with respect to the practicability of landing artillery, cavalry, &c. upon the banks of the Scheldt near Santvliet, but they were removed also by the same Opinion.

Were those the only causes your lordship had to doubt of the practicability of this enterprize ?—I believe the doubts stated in my paper are confined entirely to the progress of the armament up the Scheldt.

In point of fact, was that the only ground your lordship, as a military man, had to doubt of the probability of succeeding in this enterprize ?—There were many other circumstances of doubt certainly. For instance, whether all the intelligence was strictly true ; whether it turned out that there was such an absence of force ; whether the state of Antwerp turned out as described in that intelligence ; certainly they were all subjects of doubt ; if they had all turned out favourably I should certainly have had a confident opinion as to the success of the enterprize ; but there was great doubt whether they would all turn out to be perfectly favourable.

Then your lordship did, at the time

you sailed, entertain considerable doubt whether that information was or was not to be relied upon?—That is not what I meant at all to say. What I meant to say was, that it might be very doubtful whether the enterprize would succeed, because it required the concurrence of so many favourable circumstances. I do not mean to express any doubt as to the truth of the intelligence; but it was a consideration to make me doubt whether it would succeed or not; whether all those circumstances would turn out exactly as was wished.

Did your lordship conceive that the success of this enterprize depended entirely on the concurrence of a great many circumstances, which in their own nature were very doubtful?—I apprehend that almost all enterprizes in war must be subject to great doubt; it was impossible to know before-hand how all those circumstances would turn out.

Did the military opinions suggest no doubts to your lordship other than those which you have stated?—They might suggest some doubts, but I do not exactly know of what description; they represented the enterprize as very difficult, which undoubtedly I conceived it to be.

It is said in the report of col. Gordon, "that this would be a desperate enterprize cannot be doubted, and that in the attempt, whether successful or otherwise, a very large proportion of our naval and military means would be put to imminent hazard," did that opinion suggest no doubts to your lordship's mind which in your opinion required further discussion?—I did not conceive that either the naval or the military means of the country were exposed by the Expedition to imminent hazard.

Did your lordship understand that the possession of Flushing was necessary to the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I did.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what number of troops were destined to the siege of Flushing and the occupation of Walcheren?—The corps of troops in the first instance consisted, I think, of 12,000 men under sir Eyre Coote that went from Portsmouth.

Can your lordship state what number of men were destined to be disembarked at Santvliet for the attack of Antwerp?—Nearly the whole of the remaining force of the army.

Was not a portion of the army destined

to garrison Cadsand during the siege of Flushing?—No part of the army that was destined to have gone on in advance.

Was that part included in the 12,000 men that were destined for Walcheren?—It was never absolutely decided that Cadsand should be maintained during the siege of Flushing, it possibly might have been necessary to have done so, or might have been advantageous to have done so, but it was not destined to be occupied by any part of the corps destined to destroy the batteries, they were all to proceed to Santvliet.

Were not the instructions given to lord Huntley, that he was to occupy Cadsand until the reduction of Flushing?—The instructions to lord Huntley were, that he was to take such measures (and he had an engineer with him for that purpose) as might enable a small corps to maintain themselves at Cadsand, if it should be found necessary to maintain it during the siege of Flushing; but it was distinctly stated, that the whole of the corps under lord Huntley was to have gone on to Santvliet, and that if it had been thought desirable to maintain any post at Cadsand during the siege, it would either have been furnished by the marines of the fleet, or it would have been furnished under the concert between admiral Otway and sir Eyre Coote, from the 12,000 men that were making the siege of Flushing; my own opinion certainly was, that there was no necessity to maintain any post there, unless it had been the desire of the admiral to do so; and I stated distinctly, that I could not leave any of the corps of lord Huntley there.

Independent of the force in Walcheren, was it not the original plan to detach some force to occupy the island of Schowen, and North and South Beveland?—I did not consider it as any part of the original plan to occupy more than South Beveland; the occupation of Schowen and North Beveland arose entirely out of accidental circumstances there.

Allowing for such detachments as were in contemplation originally to have been made for the occupation of Walcheren and South Beveland, what was the amount of force with which your lordship hoped, that under favourable circumstances, in four days you might have arrived at Santvliet?—I should wish first to state, that I entertained very great hopes it would not have been necessary to have left 12,000 men or near so large a force

as that at Walcheren, but supposing that to have been left, probably about 2,000 more would have been sufficient to have left in South Beveland, which would probably have given about 2 or 3 and 20,000 for the ulterior operation.

Supposing those 2 or 3 and 20,000 men to have arrived at Santvliet within four days from the sailing of the Expedition, and to have landed under favourable circumstances, what portion of that force does your lordship think would at that time have been necessary to cover the communication with Santvliet, threatened, as it would be, from Lillo and Bergen-op-Zoom, supposing the intention was to have marched direct upon Antwerp?—I have stated that no distinct plan had been formed for the operation against Antwerp. It is extremely difficult to give an opinion upon a supposed question, and under circumstances which never existed; it must have been by the circumstances that I found to exist upon my landing at Santvliet, that I must have governed the distribution of the army, as well as every other consideration.

If your lordship had been able to effect the landing of the whole force originally intended to be landed there by the 6th of August, would it have been possible to have marched to Antwerp without leaving a force to mask Lillo and Bergen-op-Zoom?—By the 6th of August I should not think it possible that the whole of that force could have arrived, and been landed there with its artillery, cavalry, and provisions; I do not think I have stated that it could in that time. Some of the divisions, I believe, did not leave the Downs till the 30th of July, two of the corps did not arrive till the 31st of July off Walcheren.

Under the most favourable circumstances, what is the earliest day, from the sailing of the Expedition, on which your lordship conceived it to be possible that the whole of that force might have been landed in Santvliet?—It is very difficult for me to answer that question, because I do not feel myself a very competent judge of the time it would take for the armament to arrive at Santvliet; if that was stated, I can form a judgment as to the time at which the armament might be likely to be moveable.

Your lordship having stated, that under the most favourable circumstances the passage might have been effected in four days; taking that as the basis of your

supposition, on what day does your lordship think that it was possible the whole of that force might have been landed at Santvliet?—I do not apprehend the whole of the armament could have performed it in four days, they sailed at different times; the whole of the armament could not have arrived certainly in four days, there was a considerable difference in the time of their sailing.

Supposing that to have been the time employed in the passage, sailing at the times at which they did sail, on what day might that force have been assembled at Santvliet?—Supposing that to be the case, they might have arrived by the 4th or 5th of August; I believe the last sailed on the 30th of July; I sailed myself on the 28th.

According to your lordship's most sanguine expectations, on what day of August did you think it probable, that under the most favourable circumstances those 2 or 3 and 20,000 might have been disembarked at Santvliet?—I do not feel myself competent to speak to the time of their arrival; I can state how long I think possibly they might be disembarking; but it is rather a naval question than one I conceive myself able to speak to, as to the time they would have taken in arriving.

Supposing the whole of that armament to have arrived on the 4th of August, in what time would the whole of that armament have been disembarked, and have been ready to commence its march to Antwerp?—That must depend very much in the first instance on the nature of the landing-place, and secondly, on the naval means that were furnished to land the troops; but supposing the landing-place to be favourable, and assuming also that there were sufficient naval means there, I should suppose that perhaps the infantry and cavalry might have been landed in 2 or 3 days, and I suppose the heavy ordnance would probably have taken 3 or 4 days; I should think so, but it is impossible to speak with any certainty, as I am not acquainted with the nature of the place; so much would depend on the nature of the landing-place.

Does your lordship mean that the whole might have been effected within 3 or 4 days, or that the heavy ordnance would have taken 3 or 4 days in addition to the time necessary to disembark the troops?—That must have depended entirely upon the naval means, but I should think they



might have been disembarked at the same time, and I believe there were sufficient means to have done so.

Taking the shortest period, and supposing that on the 7th of August the army had been ready to march, would it at that time have been possible to have marched to Antwerp without leaving a strong detachment to mask the force in Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo?—I am not quite aware, what the force in Bergen-op-Zoom was at that particular time, it certainly would have required to be masked; Lillo would have required under those circumstances very little I should apprehend at that time.

Would it not have been a necessary precaution to have left a considerable detachment in the neighbourhood of Santvliet, to have protected the rear and the communications of the army?—Not a very large one if Bergen-op-Zoom was masked and South Beveland occupied.

Would it not have required a considerable detachment to have masked Bergen-op-Zoom on the 7th or 8th of August?—It is very difficult to form an opinion upon that subject, it must have depended wholly upon circumstances with which I am unacquainted, as we never landed.

Previously to your lordship's sailing, had you concerted any plan of operations with sir Richard Strachan?—We had had repeated conversations upon the subject, and I thought perfectly understood each other as to the mode of prosecuting the enterprise.

Has your lordship now any reason to think there was any misunderstanding upon that subject?—No, I have none.

Can your lordship state the number of fortified towns within 30 miles of Antwerp?—I really cannot.

Can your lordship state the number of fortified towns within 60 miles of Antwerp?—No, I cannot.

Before your lordship sailed upon this Expedition, was the Opinion of colonel Gordon given to your lordship for your perusal?—I have said, that I saw all the military Opinions that were given; it was not given to me in any particular way distinct from any of the others.

Were the Opinions of colonel Gordon, of general Calvert, of sir David Dundas, and of general Brownrigg, or copies of those Opinions, given to your lordship?—I think they were, I am pretty sure I had them, but I do not at this moment recollect from whom I had them, but probably

from the secretary of state for the war department.

Did your lordship consult with sir David Dundas upon the subject of his Opinion?—I have already said, that I had general conversations with sir David Dundas on the subject of his Opinion, but nothing more.

Does your lordship recollect in the Opinion of sir David Dundas, the following sentence: "In whatever way Antwerp is to be approached or taken, the service is one of very great risk, and in which the safe return of the army so employed may be very precarious?"—I remember that passage certainly.

Does your lordship recollect having any particular conversation with sir David Dundas upon the subject of that opinion he so expressed?—Not particularly.

Does your lordship recollect that you had any conversation with general Calvert upon the subject of his Opinion?—I rather think not.

Does your lordship recollect, in the Opinion of general Calvert, the following passage:—"It must however be remarked that the citadel of Antwerp is formidable, and the works of the town itself such as would demand regular approaches and a train of artillery, which could not be transported without much time and labour unless we could secure the navigation of the Scheldt, which could only be assured by the possession of the forts on the left as well as on the right bank of the river?"—I recollect that passage; I saw general Calvert very often on the subject of the equipments, but had no particular conversation with him upon the subject of his Opinion.

Does your lordship recollect having any conversation with colonel Gordon on the subject of his Opinion?—I had some conversation with him; but mere conversation only, not any official intercourse with him.

Did that conversation between colonel Gordon and your lordship amount to a discussion of the Opinion, or any part of the Opinion of colonel Gordon?—To a certain degree it did perhaps.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what passed in that conversation, discussing the Opinion to the degree to which it was discussed?—I really do not recollect it sufficiently to be able to state it; I saw colonel Gordon often, but there is no particular day to which I refer, nor do I allude to any particular conversation;

I saw him often on the subject of the Expedition, and of course talked with him on the whole subject of the Expedition.

Did your lordship at any time call upon colonel Gordon, pointedly, for any explanation of the Opinion he had so delivered?—I did not.

When your lordship was first lord of the admiralty, was any project submitted to your consideration, in your then official situation, for the attack of the island of Walcheren?—I have no remembrance that any was.

Had the first project which your lordship has stated to have been formed for the attack of Antwerp the sanction of your lordship's approbation?—I was never called upon to give a distinct opinion upon the subject militarily.

Was it at any time proposed to your lordship to carry into execution that plan which had been so formed?—It was.

Had your lordship undertaken on your part to carry that project into execution?—I never understood the measure to have been decided upon, it was a measure, I apprehend, upon which the opinion of sir David Dundas and the general officers was required.

In your lordship's Narrative, you have stated "Your Majesty will permit me here to recal to your recollection the change which took place in the original project formed for the attack of Antwerp, and of the French fleet in the West Scheldt, in consequence of the opinions of the general and staff officers, to whom this question was referred;" state to the Committee whether before the reference was made to the general officers, your lordship had received his Majesty's commands, through the secretary of state, to undertake the execution of that project?—Certainly not, I never understood even that the project was decided on.

Was your lordship consulted by his Majesty's ministers upon the propriety of such a project as the one there referred to?—I had conversations certainly with the secretary of state upon it, but I knew that opinions were asked of sir David Dundas and the general officers upon it; I never considered it as decided upon, but merely a proposition made; it had been the original proposal.

Was the opinion of your lordship asked upon that project?—Not formally asked as a general officer.

Does your lordship know with whom that project originated?—I do not feel

that I can with propriety answer that question; I do not know that as a general officer.

When was it first agreed that any notice should be taken of Cadsand in the Expedition?—I really cannot state with any precision, it arose out of the discussions upon it; but I should think rather early, I cannot state exactly, so many different projects were arising every day, but I think it was pretty early after the Expedition was decided on.

Does your lordship recollect it was a proposal at any time, and a proposal somewhat decided upon, that Cadsand should be entirely neglected?—I rather think not after the Expedition was in any forwardness; I rather think Cadsand was always insisted upon, particularly by the navy; I understood so.

Did the importance of Cadsand appear greater the more it was considered; and was the force, originally destined for that purpose, increased gradually till it came to the division of the army under lord Huntley?—I rather think the importance of it was more felt every day by the navy; great anxiety was expressed for a considerable force being employed, but it is a mistake to suppose that the whole of lord Huntley's division was destined for the service of Cadsand; there was only one brigade destined for the service of Cadsand, the other division was destined to make a diversion near the Knowle battery, at the same time lord Huntley had directions, if necessary, to support the force that landed on Cadsand; but it was never expected it would require more than one brigade at the most, I fancy one regiment would have been sufficient.

Was your lordship furnished with any intelligence of the amount of force you might expect to find on Cadsand?—I think that very much appears in the intelligence before the house; it was supposed to be extremely small.

Was your lordship furnished with any intelligence of the amount of force you might expect upon the island of Walcheren?—Not further than has been already before the House; none more precise.

Is the date marked upon the intelligence presented by your lordship, viz. the 15th of October, correctly marked?—It is.

Was that the time of its being drawn up?—It was in a great measure drawn up

at that time, and therefore it bears that date; I did not think it proper to deliver it at that time, it was not delivered of course till the 14th of February; I had reasons for not delivering it, but I thought it better to preserve the date at which it was in fact drawn up; there were after that time none but verbal or critical alterations. I considered the report as finished on that day.

Is this the only Narrative or Memorial, or paper of any description, which has been delivered to his Majesty by your lordship on the subject of the Expedition?—I have stated that this paper was prepared as my Report of my Proceedings in the Scheldt, and that it was delivered to his Majesty as such on the 14th of February; that is all I can state upon the subject of this paper which is before the House.

Was there any other narrative, paper, memorial or memorandum of any sort, delivered to his Majesty upon this subject by your lordship?—I have already to stated that this paper was prepared on the 15th of October; I am very ready to state, if it is wished, the reason I did not deliver it then; the reason I did not deliver it was, that I did not think that it was right for me to state, in fact, what would constitute my defence in case of any enquiry, whether civil or military, that was the reason I did not deliver it; I did deliver it as my Report of my Proceedings, on the 14th of February; that is all the explanation I can give on the subject of the paper that is before the House.

Was any other paper, narrative, memorial, or memorandum of any sort, delivered to his Majesty upon this subject by your lordship?—This paper, which is now before the House, is my official Report of my Proceedings; when I am asked with respect to any other paper or to any other circumstances not coming under that description, I do not feel myself at liberty to enter at all into any examination of that sort, and I must beg to decline giving any answer to the question put to me.

Was the Narrative now before the House submitted to any of his Majesty's ministers, either officially or otherwise, previously to its being delivered to his Majesty?—Not previously, it was submitted to the cabinet the day that it was delivered to the King.

Before or after its delivery?—After.

Was any communication made by your lordship to any of his Majesty's ministers of your intention to deliver such a Narrative to the King previously to its being delivered?—It was delivered after the levee, I think I stated to several of his Majesty's ministers, that I meant to deliver it that day.

Did your lordship acquaint several of his Majesty's ministers at the levee, of your intention to deliver it previously to its being delivered?—I think I stated it merely in conversation, I meant to deliver it myself to the King, having received my instructions under the sign manual, I thought it proper to present my report immediately to the King, which was afterwards laid before the cabinet.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state which of his Majesty's ministers were present at the levee, and to which of them your lordship made the communication?—I really cannot recollect, I believe most of the ministers were there. I did not state it to them in any official way, therefore it appeared very immaterial whether I stated it or not.

Does your lordship recollect that the concluding paragraph in the instructions under the sign manual, runs thus: "during your lordship's continuance on this service, you are to send or cause to be sent to us through one of our principal secretaries of state, constant accounts of all that passes; and you are to follow all such orders and directions as we shall send you either under our sign manual, or through one of our principal secretaries of state?"—Certainly; and I acted always in strict conformity thereto.

Can your lordship state any reasons for having deviated from the usual course under the usual instructions (as I suppose these to be) of delivering your Narrative of such service through one of the principal secretaries of state?—Being on the spot, I thought it more proper, in the situation in which I stood, to make the report myself to his Majesty; it would have been open to me, under that instruction, to have made it through the secretary of state, but I felt it more proper to do it as I did, and that it should go to the secretary of state afterwards.

Did your lordship make any written communication by way of Narrative or otherwise, of what had passed under your lordship's command in the Expedition to the Scheldt to his Majesty's prin-

cial secretary of state on your return?—I did not, I thought my dispatches were sufficient.

Was any Narrative or Report required by any of his Majesty's ministers of your lordship after your return?—No, none.

Was your lordship asked officially by his Majesty's ministers, after your return, for any account of your proceedings beyond what had been conveyed in the dispatches of the Expedition under your lordship's command?—I was not.

Does your lordship recollect the circumstance of an Address presented by the city of London to his Majesty on the subject of the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I do perfectly; and I believe the letter which I wrote in consequence is before this House.

Was your lordship consulted by any of his Majesty's ministers previously to the Answer given by his Majesty to that Address, upon the satisfaction he had felt with both the services upon the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I should have no difficulty in answering that question. I have some doubts quite as to its propriety, as that question cannot be asked of me as a military man. I had ceased to be in the command; I was never asked officially any question upon it. I believe, that by my letter, which is upon the table here, it will be seen that I was no party at all; that I was not present at any discussion whatever respecting the Answer to that Address.

When did your lordship apprehend your command to cease, and that you were not consulted as a general officer?—I was hardly consulted as a general officer after my return. I ceased to be in command of the Expedition in Zealand on the 25th of September.

Was your lordship consulted in your military capacity on the propriety of retaining the island of Walcheren after your lordship's return?—I think not; not officially; I was asked some questions connected with it, but I do not think I was asked any distinct opinion upon it.

What were those questions your lordship was asked?—I think there were some questions perhaps respecting how far it was defensible, with respect to the number of men it would require to garrison it, and some general questions upon the probability of an inundation, different circumstances of that sort; but I do not think I was called upon militarily to state any distinct opinion upon the subject; it is

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alluded to in some of my dispatches I think.

Did your lordship in fact state, either asked or unasked, any opinion upon the propriety of retaining the island of Walcheren?—I was not called upon to make any report upon that subject, which is the only way in which I can possibly consider I could give an answer to the question.

Your lordship did not of your own accord deliver any opinion upon that point as a military man?—No, I did not.

Your lordship has stated that your reasons for not delivering your Narrative to the King, earlier than the 14th of Feb. were, that you chose to reserve your defence till the time when any military or other enquiry might take place; will your lordship state your reason for delivering it on the precise day of the 14th of Feb.?—I had no particular reason for doing it on that precise day, except that it happened to be a levee day; why I wished to do it about that time was that I conceived there was no objection at that time to my so doing, and besides that I felt a desire that as I had not been called upon at that time to be examined here, and that the admiral had, my account of the proceedings in the Scheldt, might in some way or other, come before the public, and I knew that could not be done but by my delivering it to the King. I here think it necessary to state in addition, that one of the reasons why I wished for a certain time to delay delivering this report was, that I was in expectation that some account of his proceedings would have been delivered in by sir Richard Strachan: I had indeed understood that he had been called upon for something of that sort; I know that with a view to it he had asked for particular reports and details of several of the officers under him. I conceived he would be called upon to make some narrative of his proceedings, and I was very anxious that they should both come up precisely at the same time, that I should not state my Narrative first before any statement was given in by him.

From whom did your lordship understand that sir Richard Strachan had been called upon for a Narrative of his proceedings?—I did not know it from any good authority, for probably the thing would have taken place if I had. I allude to that which was very generally understood. I knew that all the officers under sir R. Strachan had been called upon for minute reports of their proceedings. I suppose I was mistaken or probably a re-

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port would have appeared, if it was called for from him; but I understood it from rumour, and I thought it probable.

Was it merely from common rumour, and not from any official person, you had this report?—I do not think it was from any official person.

Or any one who had been an official person?—I think not.

Or connected with any official person?—No, I think not.

Did your lordship believe at the time you delivered in that Narrative to the king, that sir R. Strachan had delivered in a Narrative of any sort?—I did not; I supposed certainly not.

Did your lordship take any steps to communicate to sir R. Strachan that you intended to deliver in such a Narrative?—Certainly not; I had no communication with sir R. Strachan from the time I left the Scheldt.

After the delivery of that Narrative, did your lordship take any steps to communicate it to sir R. Strachan?—Most certainly not, nor should I have felt myself (if I had been inclined to it) even justified in it. I do not see on what possible ground I could have communicated an official report made to the king. I believe it was moved for the very day after it was delivered to the king; therefore sir R. Strachan would have it in that way.

Before your lordship sailed upon the Expedition, had your lordship any consultation with one or more, or the whole of the general officers employed under you in the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I had a great deal of communication almost daily with most of them that were within my reach; I had no communication with the whole of them together; they never were in the same place at the same time.

Did your lordship know that there were under your command officers who had been at Antwerp in the course of service?—Yes, I did.

Did your lordship consult with those officers individually or collectively on the subject of the Expedition?—I had conversation with them or consulted with them on the subject of the Expedition; there were, I believe, one or two officers who had been there.

Will your lordship have the goodness to name who those officers were?—Sir William Erskine had been there, I saw him at Deal, and had some conversation with him on the subject of the enterprize; and I believe general Grosvenor had been

there, he had been, I know, on the Tete de Flandre, and I rather think he was in Antwerp.

Did your lordship ask or receive any opinion from the general officers under your command on the probability or improbability of the success of the enterprize?—It is very difficult to answer that question; if it is meant to ask whether I called upon any general officer to give me a report of his opinion on the probability or improbability of the enterprize, I certainly did not. I had a great deal of conversation with different officers, but their opinions must necessarily vary from time to time, according to intelligence and other circumstances.

Does your lordship recollect a particular conversation with sir John Hope, at Deal or Ramsgate, on the subject of the probability of success or failure?—I think I had a good deal of conversation with sir John Hope at Deal, on the general operations to be pursued; but I do not think that sir John Hope stated to me any distinct opinion one way or the other as to the probable success or failure of the enterprize.

Did your lordship deliver to his Majesty any other narrative, memorial, paper or memorandum, relative to the Expedition to the Scheldt, besides the one which is now upon the table of the House of Commons?—I have said that I delivered, on the 14th of Feb., to his Majesty, my official Report of my proceedings in the Scheldt, and I must be under the necessity of persisting in my determination of declining to answer any further question upon that subject.

As commander in chief of the Expedition to the Scheldt, did your lordship deliver to his Majesty any other paper, narrative or memorandum respecting the operations of that Expedition besides the Narrative now on the table of the House of Commons?—I can give no other answer than I have already; I have stated that I delivered my Report, as commander of the Expedition, to the king on the 14th of February.

Upon what grounds does your lordship refuse to answer the question just proposed?—I decline answering the questions; I have stated all I did in my military capacity, which is, that I delivered my official Report to the king on the 14th of February; on the contents of that Report I am ready to give any information.

I understood your lordship to say, that

your military capacity ended on the 25th of Sept., when your lordship landed at Deal?—No, not my military capacity; that which I stated as to my military capacity as commander of the forces ceasing, was with reference to questions as to the defence of Walcheren; I do not apprehend that my military capacity ceased, but I conceive that I continued equally amenable to any Court of Inquiry or any Court Martial.

Does your lordship refuse to answer the question just proposed on the ground of your being a privy counsellor?—I refuse it generally. I decline answering the question.

Did not the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet form one of the material objects of the Expedition to the Scheldt?—It certainly did. It was so described in the instructions.

Did your lordship know, prior to your sailing from England, that the French fleet could put itself under the protection of the batteries at Antwerp?—I had no very precise information communicated to me upon that subject; it was rather a naval question.

In the event that your lordship should find, on your arrival, the fleet had so put itself in protection under the citadel of Antwerp, and that your lordship should find the citadel and the town of Antwerp in a state of defence, had your lordship in this country formed any determination as to what were to be your lordship's operations under those circumstances?—I have before said that no precise plan of operations was fixed upon before I left this country; it must have depended entirely upon circumstances, and the intelligence when we arrived.

In the event of your lordship's finding the enemy in possession of no army ready to take the field against your lordship's army, but in a state of defence in Antwerp, had your lordship formed any determination as to your operation, whether you would, in order to destroy the fleet, as one of the great objects, besiege Antwerp?—I had formed no determination before I went; as I said, that must depend upon circumstances at the time.

Then your lordship had formed no plan of operations prior to your sailing from this country?—No detailed plan of operations.

Did your lordship on your arrival in the Scheldt, find the state of Antwerp and the preparations of the enemy in the

field and in the fortresses, such as was represented to your lordship to be the state of the enemy prior to your lordship's sailing from this country?—I gradually obtained information as well as I could of the state of the enemy's force, and the state of Antwerp, I did not find any such information on my arrival in the Scheldt.

Did your lordship find the state of the enemy's fortresses at Antwerp and on the Scheldt, and the enemy's force at Antwerp and in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, on your lordship's arrival, to correspond with that represented to be the state of those fortresses, and of that force, prior to your sailing from England?—I had no means of knowing the state of Antwerp; on my arrival in the Scheldt, I obtained gradually information on the subject.

Prior to your lordship's sailing from England, had your lordship any intelligence as to the state of Antwerp, and the strength of the enemy in Antwerp and its neighbourhood?—I had no more precise information upon that subject than what is contained in the intelligence that is before the House.

Did your lordship find that intelligence correct?—I do not know how to answer that question exactly, or how I could ever ascertain whether it was correct; is it meant to be asked whether it was correct at the time it was given.

Whether the state in which your lordship found the enemy and his fortresses on your arrival in the Scheldt, corresponded with that represented to your lordship to be the state of the enemy prior to your lordship leaving this country?—I did not find on my arrival any information on this subject, I acquired information gradually of the strength of Antwerp and the enemy's force.

Did such information as your lordship gradually acquired after your arrival there, correspond with the information previously received here?—I think not entirely as to the state of Antwerp.

Did it materially differ as to the state of Antwerp?—I believe that the intelligence so far as it went, not immediately on my arrival but at a subsequent time, went to state that the works of Antwerp had been put into a state of repair.

Does your lordship believe that the works of Antwerp, particularly the citadel of Antwerp, were not put into a state of repair until after the arrival of your lord-

ship in the Scheldt?—I should fancy before that time, but I cannot speak correctly.

Had your lordship any intelligence before you sailed from this country, that the guns of the citadel of Antwerp commanded what are called the arsenals at Antwerp?—I believe I have already answered that question, as far as I am enabled to do it; I had no certain intelligence I believe upon that subject.

Did your lordship expect when you sailed to find Antwerp in a bad state of defence, both as to its fortifications and its garrison?—A great deal of the intelligence certainly went to that effect.

Did your lordship issue any private or confidential instructions to the gen. officers under your command?—I cannot speak positively, but I apprehend the instructions, at least many of them, to the gen. officers, are upon the table of the House.

Was your lordship furnished with heavy artillery suitable to the siege of Antwerp, in the event of its being necessary to undertake a siege independent of that used for the siege of Flushing?—I cannot answer that question without knowing under what circumstances it is meant.

Was your lordship furnished, prior to your sailing from this country, with heavy ordnance, in the event of its being necessary to undertake the siege of Antwerp; had you any ordnance sufficient to undertake that siege independent of the ordnance for the siege of Flushing, sufficient to enable your lordship to carry on the two sieges at once if necessary?—I am afraid I cannot perfectly answer that question, without knowing what circumstances are supposed by the question, whether under the circumstance of Antwerp being in a perfect state of defence, and with a sufficient and ample garrison, or under any other supposition.

Under the supposition either of Antwerp being sufficiently garrisoned, and in a sufficient state of defence, and that it would be necessary to undertake a regular siege, or was your lordship furnished with heavy mortars sufficient to bombard the town, in the event of a bombardment being resorted to?—That is a professional question which I do not know how to answer, unless it is accurately stated; I do not perfectly take the question.

Was your lordship furnished with a sufficiency of heavy artillery to enable

you to carry on the two operations, the one against Antwerp and the other against Flushing, at the same time?—I had a sufficiency of heavy artillery in proportion to the strength of the army. I certainly had not a sufficiency of artillery (nor was it in contemplation) for the siege of the town and citadel of Antwerp, supposing it to be in repair and sufficiently garrisoned, such a siege could never have been in contemplation with the army I commanded. I wish to add, that there was a sufficiency of ordnance in any case for bombardment; but in the event of a siege, the heavy ordnance for the Expedition against Antwerp was to be furnished by the navy.

[His lordship was directed to withdraw. —The Chairman was directed to report progress; and ask leave to sit again.]

## 12.

*Martis, 27<sup>o</sup> die Februarii, 1810.*

The Right. Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

MEMORANDUM of Sir John Hope, dated Schoore, South Beveland, 23d August 1809; transmitted by Sir John Hope to the Chairman; was read.

*London, 23d Feb. 1810.*

“Sir; In obedience to the orders of the Committee of the whole House, appointed to enquire into the policy and conduct of the late Expedition to the Scheldt, of which you are chairman, I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of the confidential memorandum given by me to lieutenant. gen. Brownrigg on the 23d of August last:—And I have, &c.

JOHN HOPE, Lieut. General.”

“*Sir John Anstruther, Bart.*”

“Confidential.

“MEMORANDUM—Schoore, in South Beveland, 23d August 1809.

“There appears to me to be three distinct modes, according to which an operation against Antwerp and the fleet of the enemy may be directed.—The first, and what I believe has hitherto been most generally looked to, I take to be this:—That the whole disposable land force should be carried either by a disembarkation or by crossing the ford at the east end of South Beveland, or by both these methods, to the right bank of the

Scheldt and the neighbourhood of Sandvliet; that a corps should be allotted for the purpose of watching Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo; and that the remainder of the army should march direct upon Antwerp.

—I shall suppose, that after leaving what is considered an adequate force in Walcheren, there may remain 30,000 men disposable.—It appears indispensable, that a corps should remain in South Beveland; but in order to take the most favourable view of our affairs, I shall only allot for that object 2,000 men.—It will not be considered too much, I apprehend, to assign 6,000 men for the purpose of watching Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo. A deduction of 8,000 men must therefore be made from the force that can be carried against Antwerp, leaving for that operation a corps of 22,000.—I do not imagine that Antwerp has ever been in a situation to expose it to be carried by a *coup-de-main*; nor is there, I think, reason to conclude, from any information that has been received respecting the state of the fortifications, that at any period we could have got possession of it without erecting works, and bringing heavy ordnance before the place.—Supposing, however, that it had been practicable to push at once a corps of 20 or 22,000 men upon Antwerp, the labours of a siege might thereby have been much lightened, the time necessary to reduce the place much abridged, and it is not an improbable supposition, that the influence of panic and surprize, combined with an unprepared state of defence, might have thrown it into our hands at a comparatively easy rate.—The practicability of thus attacking Antwerp in an unprepared state, when we consider the naval force of the enemy in the Scheldt, and the difficulties of the navigation, both in the eastern and western branch of the river, to say the least, has always appeared to me very problematical. If, however, such a moment ever did exist, it certainly has now past over.—It becomes therefore necessary, to look to the considerations that affect the enterprise in its present stage, and if conducted according to the plan supposed.—The forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoek commanding the navigation, and it being no part of this plan to reduce them, or indeed to use the Scheldt beyond the point at which the fleet is already arrived, all further naval assistance must be limited to the protection of the place of disembarkation, from an attack of the enemy's flotilla, to

facilitating the landing of stores and supplies, and to holding in readiness the means of re-embarking the troops, should any circumstance render that a necessary measure.—It is clear that according to this plan the whole of the ordnance, ammunition and stores requisite for a siege, must be transported by land from the place of disembarkation, a distance probably of not less than 15 miles, and which may possibly be rendered still greater by the inundations which the enemy has it in his power to make.—Considering the time the enemy has had to prepare, it is not improbable that he has taken measures to deprive us of the supplies, which would have been otherwise furnished by the country. It is evident that he has the greatest facility in doing this, and it is not probable that he will neglect it. Besides we must not reckon upon the same facility in procuring supplies in Flanders that we have hitherto found in Zealand; it will be to us, strictly speaking, an enemy's country, and in the most favourable view we can only depend upon what is produced by the country immediately occupied by our arms.—In addition, therefore, to the transport of the ordnance, and other materials of a siege, it is to be apprehended that great part of the supplies for the army must be conveyed by land, and much labour, time and exertion consumed.—In escorting and forwarding these supplies of all kinds, as well as in guarding the *dépôt* at the place of disembarkation, a considerable portion of troops must necessarily be employed.—It has been supposed that 6,000 men might be sufficient to watch Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo. This supposition, however, will be allowed to state that force fully as low as under any circumstances, prudence can possibly warrant. Bergen-op-Zoom cannot be invested by any such force, and remains therefore open to receive reinforcements, and to become the point of assembly for troops from Holland to any amount that it may be possible to collect them, and it is very improbable that the enemy should not be able very speedily to assemble such a force as, with the present garrison, will make the situation of the corps opposed to him an uneasy one, and even enable him to threaten South Beveland. The importance of Lillo to us and to the enemy must not be estimated by the magnitude or nature of this place itself; was it an isolated point, or could we complete the investment of this fort, it would not require



much of our consideration; but whilst the enemy possesses the navigation of the Scheldt above Lillo, with Liefkenshoeik and the left bank of the river, the former place becomes a *tete-de-pont* which he will unquestionably use, and from whence he will act upon our line of operations.—These considerations, as they apply to Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo, make it highly probable, that it will be immediately necessary to reinforce considerably the corps allotted to observe them. It is not therefore unfair to conclude that the besieging army would be very speedily reduced to about 18,000 men.—With this force, or indeed with any that we can bring against it, it is impossible, I apprehend, to invest Antwerp on both sides of the river; and without doing so, our operations can hardly prove effectual. But suppose that measure may not be thought necessary, 18 or 20,000 men is a very inadequate force for the purpose in view.—For, although we may not perhaps require what is termed a covering army, in the first instance, yet unquestionably a corps of some kind must be pushed towards the Neth, to observe the enemy's motions, and to procure in some measure supplies from the country.—With a very diminished force then, we should commence operations against a place, in which, whatever may have been its state some time ago, there is an active and intelligent enemy, who has now had between three weeks and a month to make decided preparations and to collect means, who has a great stake to guard, who has the certainty of every effort being made for his relief, and the facility of receiving reinforcements and supplies to any amount that can be furnished.—Whatever therefore may be the ultimate degree of resistance made by Antwerp, it seems perfectly evident that we shall be compelled to go through all the labour and employ all the time requisite to enable us to commence a siege in form, and it is certainly very improbable that the enemy should not in that time be able to assemble such a force as will frustrate the enterprise.—The second mode of proceeding that occurs to me, although open to objection, inasmuch as time would be consumed, presents more security in our first operations, and would furnish the means of withdrawing the army, in case of failure, with a comparatively greater degree of safety.—The mode I allude to, embraces the attack of the forts Lillo and Liefkenshoeik as a previous measure, and pro-

ceeding from the former in the manner pointed out in the first plan.—Some time must undoubtedly be consumed in this previous operation, which the enemy would benefit by and take advantage of to increase his means of defence. But we should to a greater and much more secure degree command the navigation of the river. The transport of provisions, ordnance, ammunition, and stores, might be somewhat shortened, and it would be from Bergen-op-Zoom alone that any material apprehension would be entertained for the security of our line of operations.—It is improbable that naval co-operation could, even in this case, be reckoned upon beyond the points of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, because the fleet opposed in the narrow channel by the enemy's flotilla, and exposed to the effect of his batteries on the left bank, could not be expected to make much progress, or to hold with any certainty the ground it might gain. It seems therefore doubtful, whether this second plan deserves much preference in comparison with the first.—The third plan of operations is ill suited to the extent of our means, but with an adequate force is the only one that would seem to promise ultimate success, in the attainment of our object.—According to my ideas of this plan, the main body of the army, after the reduction of the forts Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and after allotting a corps for the purpose of masking Bergen-op-Zoom, should march direct upon Antwerp, and form the siege of that place, pushing a light corps upon the Nethe, whilst a detached corps should proceed by Hulst, to turn the defences of the left bank of the Scheldt, enabling thereby the fleet to proceed up the river with all the means of attack, and with the view to place itself in immediate communication with the besieging army on the right bank.—The corps on the left bank would complete the investment on that side, and it would be matter for consideration how far it should co-operate in the actual attack.—As such a corps would be without support, it must necessarily be of considerable strength, and such therefore as our present numbers can, I apprehend, in no shape afford.—The division of our force, under present circumstances, has this decided disadvantage, that the enemy would have the option of falling on either corps with his united means, and with every prospect of success; and he would require

a much shorter time to enable him to assemble a force sufficient for that purpose, than if we acted collectively. He probably would first turn his attention to the corps detached to the left bank, and as it seems not being very likely that more than from 6 to 10,000 men could be spared for that operation from the main army, he would probably succeed, first in cutting off its supplies, and then attack it with advantage.—If his attention was first attracted by the corps before Antwerp, it is surely not too much to conceive that he could, in ten days or a fortnight, collect such a force as would compel it to raise the siege, and to collect the whole of the troops on the right bank for the purpose of fighting an action, which, even under the supposition of the result being favourable to us, might afford him the opportunity of succouring the place in some degree, and would certainly reduce us to the necessity (if we prosecuted the siege) of retracing our steps through all the laborious path of such an operation.—It seems therefore evident, that operations on the left bank of the river are to any extent impracticable, unless the whole force was to act upon that side, which would form a fourth view of the subject; but which, as it is understood, the enemy has to a great degree inundated the country, and may still carry that mode of defence to a greater extent, it may not be necessary to consider.—In any event, an operation on the left bank with the whole force, would only imply a bombardment, without any investment of the place, and the reduction of the work which occupies the Tete-de-Flandre, if the enemy neglected to inundate it. For if we are reduced by the inundation to approach this work by the dykes on its flanks, protected as they would be by his shipping, I conceive our prospect of success would be small.

The right hon. the Earl of CHATHAM called in :—Examined by the Committee.

In a letter from lord Castlereagh to your lordship, dated the 2d September 1809. to be found in Paper (A.) in No. 6. your lordship is reminded of positive instructions relative to obstructing the navigation of the Scheldt; the words are these—“I am to express to your lordship his Majesty’s confident persuasion that previous to your return and in conformity to your instructions, your lordship will co-operate with the navy in giving ef-

fect to any measures sir Richard Strachan may think fit to adopt for obstructing the navigation of the Scheldt;” what steps did your lordship take to give effect to that instruction?—I had it not in my power to give any.

How was the army employed from the taking of Flushing on the 12th or 15th of August, till their retreat was resolved on?—The army was not employed at all during that period; it could not be employed during that period.

Before or at the time of the sailing of the Expedition, was your lordship instructed to believe Antwerp to be pregnable by a *coup de main*?—I had intelligence communicated to me, that the fortifications of Antwerp were in so bad a state that perhaps it might be open to a *coup de main*.

If success had attended the attack on the arsenals of Antwerp and the French fleet, was your lordship instructed to look to any ulterior object?—I had no other instructions than are before the Committee.

During the interval between your lordship’s return from Walcheren and your resignation of the command, had your lordship frequent returns of the number of the sick?—I considered myself as having given up the actual command of the army in Walcheren when I left the island of Walcheren; I gave it up to lieutenant-general sir E. Coote; I was off the staff, as it was called, of that Expedition, on the 25th of September.

During the interval between your lordship’s return from Walcheren and the cessation of your command, did the propriety of returning and resuming the command under all its difficulties, ever suggest itself to your lordship’s mind?—I did not conceive myself as at liberty to have returned; I had given up the command by order from the secretary of state.

Did the appointment of your lordship’s staff cease on the 25th of September?—I really cannot positively say, but I take for granted it did.

Of how many aid-de-camps did your lordship’s staff consist?—I think it consisted of three. I suppose the question is meant to refer to officers on pay. There is one aid-de-camp to me as master general of the ordnance; that I apprehend not to be included in the question.

Your lordship arrived at Bathz on the 24th of August; was that the first time of your lordship’s being there?—I think it was.

Did your lordship think the bombardment of Flushing necessary to its reduction, or might it not have fallen by investment?—It was invested for the purpose of being attacked.

Was the bombardment of Flushing necessary to its reduction?—The place was regularly besieged; it was not merely a bombardment.

Your lordship having stated that you had received information that from the state of works of Antwerp, Antwerp was liable to be taken by a *coup-de-main*; from whom did your lordship receive that information?—It was in the information which has been laid upon the table; I received it from the secretary of state officially.

Did any conversation pass between your lordship and the secretary of state, upon the subject of the taking Antwerp by a *coup-de-main*?—I do not know absolutely by a *coup-de-main*; but I had conversations as to whether it might not be taken without a regular siege, or without a bombardment.

In what way was it proposed at that time that Antwerp should be taken, if not by a *coup-de-main* yet without siege or bombardment?—If there had been an opening for it from the state of the works, and the weakness of the garrison, probably by assault.

Did lord Castlereagh express to your lordship any expectation that Antwerp would be taken by assault?—He certainly expressed such expectation, under the circumstances which I have stated.

Those circumstances mean the intelligence to which your lordship has referred?—The works being ~~in~~ so bad a state, and the garrison so weak as to admit of such a measure.

Did lord Castlereagh inform your lordship that he supposed the works to be so weak, and the garrison to be in such a state as that your lordship would be able to take it by assault?—He seemed certainly to think that it might be possible, under the favourable circumstances I have mentioned.

With all the intelligence submitted to your lordship by lord Castlereagh, did your lordship ever entertain any expectation that you should be able to take Antwerp by assault?—If that intelligence, which represented the very decayed state of the works and the absence of troops to the great extent stated in some of the intelligence, had turned out to be true, I

certainly thought it might have been possible to have taken Antwerp by some vigorous attack, probably by assault.

Is the Committee to understand, that the only intelligence upon which those conversations were founded, was the intelligence now before the Committee?—I hardly know how to answer that question exactly, because the secretary of state might have other intelligence; I do not exactly know whether the intelligence laid upon the table here is all the intelligence, but I conclude it is all the intelligence the secretary of state possessed.

Did your lordship ever make any disposition in your own mind, or give any information to any general officer under your lordship, of the probability of an assault being undertaken upon Antwerp?—No disposition certainly (as I believe I stated on a former night) was made or could have been made; it must have depended entirely on circumstances, and having reconnoitered the place very attentively.

Did your lordship ever communicate to any general officer under your command the expectation formed in your lordship's mind and that of lord Castlereagh, on the event of the intelligence proving true, of being able to carry Antwerp by assault?—In the event of the place being in a situation to admit of it, I believe I at different times conversed with different officers on the probability of getting into Antwerp without having recourse to a siege or a bombardment; no regular plan of attack was stated, for the reason I have given, nor could be.

Will your lordship state to the Committee the names of any general officers with whom you conversed on the subject of taking Antwerp by assault? I should think I must have mentioned it to all the general officers, or to all probably with whom I had conversation on the subject.

Does your lordship recollect ever having mentioned the subject to sir John Hope?—I rather think not; for this reason, that I had no considerable intercourse with sir John Hope till I was in South Beveland; I saw him once at Deal; at the time I saw sir John Hope in South Beveland, certainly I knew it could not be then taken by assault.

Did your lordship ever communicate with sir Eyre Coote upon that subject?—I have had many conversations with sir Eyre Coote.

Upon that subject?—I think on every

subject connected with the enterprise, I have conversed with him; there was no regular disposition or plan communicated.

Does your lordship recollect having any particular conversation marked so as to call it to your mind with sir Eyre Coote, on the taking of Antwerp by assault, and the probability of success in that enterprise?—I do not recollect any pointed or particular conversation; I believe that he always considered that our ulterior operations must be regulated wholly by circumstances after we landed at Santvliet.

Previous to sailing or at any other time did your lordship ever ask the opinion of sir E. Coote, as to the practicability of taking Antwerp by assault, or the probability of success in that enterprise?—I did not ask any formal opinion on the subject of sir E. Coote; but I conversed with him on different modes of operation that we might pursue.

Was the opinion of sir E. Coote ever asked by your lordship or given by sir E. Coote unasked, as to the practicability of taking Antwerp by assault or the probability of success in that enterprise?—I think it was not, I conceive that he considered any operation to depend wholly on circumstances we found after we landed.

Is the Committee to understand that no opinion was asked or was given by sir E. Coote on that particular point?—No formal opinion.

Was any opinion at all?—No positive opinion; there was no formal or distinct opinion given by sir E. Coote.

Was any opinion at all, formal or informal, given to your lordship by sir E. Coote, on that subject?—I do not know that there was any opinion at all given; because I know that he considered our operations must be regulated by circumstances when we arrived.

Was any opinion upon this subject asked by your lordship of lord Rosslyn?—No opinion was asked of lord Rosslyn that I know of, upon this subject; I did not understand from him that he knew any thing of Antwerp.

Did your lordship communicate with any other general officer in your army, on the subject of the practicability of taking Antwerp by assault?—I think I had conversations with some of the general officers, but no particular conversation that I can relate, upon this subject.

Can your lordship name any other general officer besides sir E. Coote?—I conceive as I said before, that that question must

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have arisen in conversation with all the general officers; we talked generally of the means of our further operations; but no distinct opinion was asked, because I did not conceive they could give one.

Does your lordship recollect any marked conversation on that subject with lord Paget?—I had a good deal of conversation at different times with lord Paget; I do not recollect any marked conversation, that is, any formal or distinct opinion given by him upon that subject.

With gen. Grosvenor?—I have had conversation with gen. Grosvenor on the subject generally.

With gen. Brownrigg?—I had.

Upon that particular point?—On that point.

Does your lordship recollect the conversation that passed between your lordship and gen. Brownrigg on that particular point?—I cannot recollect any particular conversation; my conversations with gen. Brownrigg were very frequent.

As the prospect of taking Antwerp by assault could only have existed in the early part of the enterprise, and immediately after the landing of the troops, had your lordship formed any disposition in your own mind, or settled who should be the officer to command so important an undertaking?—The disposition for that purpose would have been made according to circumstances, and when the place had been reconnoitered; of course there could be no disposition previously made on the subject, and of course no officer fixed to the command.

Was any reconnoissance of Antwerp made at any time?—Never; it could not be, because we never landed on the continent.

Does your lordship recollect, before it was decided that your lordship should receive instructions of a general description under the sign manual, receiving a memorandum of a more detailed description, in the form of instructions from lord Castlereagh, about the 23d of June last, which stated the general ground upon which lord Castlereagh conceived at that time that the Expedition was to proceed?—I do remember such a paper.

Does your lordship conceive that the general outline of the plan laid down in that paper, corresponded with the plan your lordship proceeded to execute under the instructions under the sign manual, which bear date the 16th of July?—I conceive that it did entirely.

(2 B)

In that memorandum or statement, was the attack on Antwerp described as intended to, be a simultaneous operation with the descent on the island of Walcheren?—It certainly was.

Did not that memorandum also give a general description of the information of which his Majesty's government at that time were in possession, with respect to the defences of the Scheldt, including the works of Antwerp?—I think it did, as well as I recollect.

Did it not contain a general reference to certain military obstacles that the army might expect to meet with on their arrival before Antwerp, to impede the complete execution of the service, and did it not particularly contemplate the possibility of the enemy's being enabled to avail himself of the protection of the guns of the citadel to secure either the whole or a part of the ships afloat; and did not your lordship understand that the decision upon the policy of the Expedition was formed, having those difficulties in view?—I did.

Upon the information that lord Castlereagh was enabled to lay before your lordship before you left England, what degree of hope did you feel yourself justified in entertaining, that the ulterior objects of the Expedition might be successfully accomplished, supposing the fleet arrived at Santvliet upon the 3d of August?—I think that if the intelligence turned out to be true, and that every other circumstance also turned out favourably, I should have entertained (as I believe I said when I was before examined) a confident hope of success as to the result of the Expedition: by circumstances turning out favourably, I mean, if the fleet could have arrived by the 2d or 3d of August at Santvliet.

Were the equipments of the army framed on such a principle as to admit of the most rapid advance on Antwerp after its debarkation, with reference particularly to the heavy artillery attached to the army being horsed, and to its being accompanied by a considerable force of cavalry for the purpose of observing the neighbouring garrisons, and covering the communications of the army?—I think it was supposing Antwerp to have been in such a state as that it might have been taken by a *coup de-main*, or might have yielded to a bombardment alone.

Can your lordship state to the Committee generally the amount of heavy

ordnance completely horsed that was attached to that portion of the army?—I do not think I could state it exactly in that way, the number of horses that would be required to mount each piece of ordnance would depend so much upon circumstances, the state of the roads, and a great variety of other circumstances; there were horses enough to mount a train equal certainly to the bombardment of Antwerp.

What number of horses for the service of the heavy artillery were attached to that corps of the army?—Between 900 and 1,000; I am not quite sure whether they were all actually arrived by the 3d of August, but they would have been within a very few days.

State to the Committee in a general way what number of days you apprehend would have been necessary after the corps arrived at Santvliet to disembark and advance it to Antwerp in a state to storm the town, if the situation of the works admitted of such an operation?—I cannot possibly state how long it would have taken to have landed the army, as it must have depended entirely upon the nature of the breach and the naval means there were for that purpose, but I conclude that it might have been done in the course of two or three days.

How many days does your lordship conceive it would have required to disembark and move the corps to Antwerp in a situation to bombard the town, with the necessary means of bombarding the town?—I think, with the communications I had with the officers of artillery upon that subject, that after the heavy ordnance and horses were all landed, they might have arrived before Antwerp in a state to begin the bombardment in five days; that is on the supposition of moving 30 pieces of heavy ordnance.

In that communication is the time required for disembarking the army included, or not?—It is not included.

When did the first appearances of sickness to any extent shew themselves in the army?—I think towards the 20th of August, to any considerable degree.

Had the army been healthy prior to that period?—It had been very healthy.

Did your lordship understand that the crews of the ships employed in the Scheldt, or that any of the troops so long as they continued on board the transports, were affected by the disease prevalent in the island of Walcheren and South Beveland?—I did not understand that they were.

Supposing the army had been carried up at once to Santvliet, and disembarked there for carrying on operations against Antwerp, has your lordship any reason to suppose that the health of the army would have been exposed to suffering from the same disease that affected the troops in Walcheren and South Beveland?—I believe that the vicinities of Antwerp (but I cannot speak from my own knowledge) is certainly healthier than the islands of South Beveland and Walcheren, and that whilst the troops remained embarked they certainly would not have been exposed to any sickness.

Has your lordship any reason to believe that the disease prevailed at all in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, unless quite on the edge of the river which is subject to inundation?—I cannot speak to that fact, for I really have no knowledge upon the subject; but I believe the neighbourhood of Antwerp is not generally considered as unhealthy.

Was landing so large a portion of the army, and continuing them for so long a period of time on South Beveland, any part of the original plan of the Expedition, or did it arise out of circumstances after it had arrived in the Scheldt?—It was no part of the original plan to have landed any more of the army in South Beveland than was absolutely necessary for the taking the several batteries to enable the fleet to proceed, and to have collected the resources of the island in horses, waggons, &c. for the use of the army, to render it moveable when it landed at Santvliet; the landing so large a portion of the corps arose entirely from circumstances after our arrival in the Scheldt.

Your lordship having stated that you did not conceive that the Expedition to the Scheldt exposed either the navy or the army to imminent hazard, will your lordship have the goodness to state generally to the Committee the grounds upon which that opinion is formed so far as relates to military operations?—There might be more or less loss, but I did not consider that there was any very great risk in the Expedition against Walcheren, or in taking possession of South Beveland, or in the subsequent landing of the army, according to the intelligence received of the strength of the enemy: and I was confirmed in that opinion by the intelligence I afterwards received; there was no force collected at Antwerp that I could consider as exposing the army to imminent danger.

Supposing the army had continued in perfect health on the 25th of August, and that sir Richard Strachan had considered it of importance that an endeavour should be made to open the Scheldt, to the enterprise of the navy, by the reduction of the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, so far as concerns the security of the army, would your lordship have hesitated to undertake a landing at that period?—I think I certainly should have landed the army, if sir Richard Strachan had required it at that time, supposing the army to be in perfect health; whether I could have undertaken an Expedition against Lillo and Liefkenshoeik at that advanced period, I am not prepared to say; I should rather think I could not, with the force collected on the part of the enemy. have ventured to divide the army so as to make a siege of both places; but that must have depended so much upon circumstances, it is impossible to give a precise opinion as to what I should have done when the army was landed; but I should not have hesitated to land it, if required by the navy, the army being in good health.

Is the Committee to understand your lordship's opinion to be, that in case the fleet had arrived on the 3d at Bakhz, the army might have been disembarked, and continued on shore from the 3d down to the 25th, without prejudice, in your lordship's judgment, to its secure re-embarkation?—The army might certainly have continued to that period, had it been collected in the field: but I am by no means sure it could have remained in security, embarked in any operations to that period, that would necessarily have divided the army very much, and not placed it in a state to make head against the enemy.

From the information your lordship received, what do you conceive to be the composition of the enemy's force, in a military point of view?—There was certainly a very large part of that force, which, though applicable to garrison duty, would not have been formidable in the field.

Did your lordship understand a very considerable proportion of the force consisted of battalions of conscripts and the depôts of the regiments serving at that time in Spain and on the Danube?—From the general information I obtained, I believe there was a considerable part of the force so composed; there were also some other regiments of a more regular description.

Does your lordship recollect informa-

tion received by sir John Hope, which bears date 23d of August, and which states the enemy's force on both sides of the Scheldt, including the garrisons of Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp, to amount to 21,780 men, exclusive of the workmen of the arsenals and the crews of the ships?—I think there was such intelligence received, that accords very much with all the rest of the intelligence, which made the whole number about 35,000 men at the time of our arrival at Bathz.

Does your lordship know why that intelligence does not appear in the quartermaster general's report?—No, I do not: I rather think it was intelligence received after the 27th, which was the time the Opinion of the general officers were taken, but I will not be sure; I know no reason why it was not inserted.

Taking the enemy's force on that statement, and considering the quality of that force, and also its distribution, should your lordship have considered that your army, if on shore at that moment, would have been exposed to any risk in effecting its re-embarkation, if it found it necessary by the operations of such a force in the field against you?—That must have depended very much on the situation in which the army I commanded stood at the time; if collected, as I have before said, I do not think it would have been in any danger from such a force: I suppose always in reference to this question, the army to be in perfect health.

Supposing your lordship had found yourself in a situation to land your army at Santvliet, at the beginning instead of the close of the month of August, what hope do you now feel yourself justified in entertaining with respect to the prospects you should have had of accomplishing the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—If the intelligence, which I am not able to speak positively to, had been true, respecting the state of Antwerp, which I had received in the communications from the secretary of state, I could certainly have had considerable hopes of success; but if Antwerp was in a state that the works were completely repaired, I should certainly have thought that success, even if we had landed at the early period named, had been very doubtful indeed.

Your lordship having stated in the former part of your examination, that in order to open the Scheldt so as to enable the Navy to proceed up to Antwerp, in addition to the sieges of Lillo and Lief-

kenshoeik, it would have been necessary to take two other batteries, fort Frederick-Henry and another fort; were not those forts, when the Expedition arrived in the Scheldt, in a ruined and dismantled state; and was it not after that arrival that the enemy began to work upon them with a view of making use of them?—I cannot recollect at this time; I think that the answer referred to the landing that was proposed after the army arrived at Bathz on the 25th of August: I think when we arrived in the Scheldt fort Frederick-Henry had been understood to be dismantled. I think I stated that on the 25th of August fort Frederick-Henry and another battery newly erected would have been to be destroyed.

Were the works alluded to at that time closed works or opened batteries?—Fort Frederick-Henry had been an inclosed work formerly; but I had no actual knowledge of it at the time I was there.

Has your lordship any reason to know that the town of Antwerp has defended itself against any siege since the year 1584, when it was attacked by the duke of Parma?—I believe it has not stood a siege since that time.

What number of days of open trenches did the citadel of Antwerp defend itself, when it was attacked in the year 1746, by a detachment of marshal Saxe's army, after the confederates had retired, without resistance from the city of Antwerp?—As well as I remember, at that period it had thrown into it a garrison of 1,600 men; I think it was attacked by the army under the conte de Clermo, twenty battalions of infantry and sixteen squadrons of horse; the enemy abandoned the town of Antwerp, and the army of besiegers was also in possession of the left bank of the river: I think, to the best of my recollection, the siege lasted about eight days, but I cannot speak positively; I have seen an account of it in military books.

Does your lordship recollect how many days the fort of Lillo defended itself in the following year, against an attack from a detachment of the same army?—I cannot state exactly: I have seen accounts: I think about five days; but the sieges were connected: there was the siege of Lillo and two or three other forts which were then in repair, and I think the attack of the whole lasted thirteen days; but it is rather matter of history than any thing I have any particular knowledge of, and the army who attacked Lillo

were, at that time, in possession of Liefkenshoeik and the left bank of the river.

Supposing it had been determined to advance the army on Antwerp, without undertaking the preliminary sieges of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and consequently that the navy could not have acted in the upper parts of the Scheldt, might not the marines and seamen of the fleet have been landed in considerable number in aid of the operations on shore?—I cannot very well speak to that question; it depended entirely upon the navy; but I should be inclined to think, from the assistance we derived from the navy, from parties of marines and seamen landing at the attack of Walcheren, that we should have derived material assistance from the seamen of the fleet.

Taking into your consideration the naval assistance that you had reason to expect in carrying on the siege of Flushing, what is the greatest amount of force your lordship calculated upon being enabled to assemble for operations against Antwerp without discontinuing the siege of Flushing, upon the supposition that the army continued in health, and also that the blockade of Flushing was rendered effectual at the outset of the operations?—I should think that if only a garrison of about 3,000 men had been in Flushing, possibly some part of the corps under sir Eyre Coote might perhaps have been withdrawn, for the ulterior operations before the siege was at an end; to what degree it is impossible for me to state.

Had your lordship any doubt of the truth of the information you had received respecting the state of Antwerp before you sailed from Deal?—I had no particular reason whatever to doubt it; no intelligence came to me that either went to make me doubt it or to confirm the truth of it; I had no intelligence indeed but what was transmitted to me by the secretary of state before I left the Downs.

Is the Committee to understand your lordship sailed with the Expedition from Deal believing you should find the situation of Antwerp accord with the information your lordship had received?—I knew nothing whatever of the truth of the intelligence; of course I could only know whether it would turn out to be true or not. When I arrived at my destination, I had no ground for believing or disbelieving it; I had no means of knowing whether the intelligence was from good sources or otherwise.

Did your lordship sail from Deal calculating upon finding the situation of Antwerp such as had been represented to you?—I could not know any thing as to what would be the state in which I should find Antwerp.

Had your lordship any reason to believe that you would have found the situation of Antwerp different from that which had been represented to you by the information conveyed to your lordship by his Majesty's secretary of state?—I had no positive information that could lead me to form such a conclusion: I had heard of course in conversation various conjectures about the state of Antwerp, but I had nothing that gave me any grounds to disbelieve the intelligence at all that was submitted to me by the secretary of state.

Did your lordship believe that the ultimate success of the Expedition against Antwerp depended upon the fleet arriving at Santvliet by or about the 3d of August, according to the intelligence which your lordship had received?—I think it depended very much on the early arrival of the army at Santvliet, as of course the enemy would be in a state of less preparation.

Then, as your lordship sailed from Deal, having received information that the fortifications of Antwerp were in a state of decay, and that there was but a very small garrison there, and as your lordship believed that the object of carrying Antwerp was only likely to be attained by the speedy arrival of the armament at Santvliet, did your lordship make any arrangement, and what, for disembarking the army, in the first instance, at Santvliet?—That arrangement could only be made on the arrival of the armament at Santvliet, in concert of course with the admiral.

Is the Committee to understand that your lordship sailed from Deal without making any arrangement for landing the army at Santvliet?—Without any decided arrangement for that purpose; certainly none could possibly be made, from the nature of the circumstance.

Did your lordship upon your sailing make any arrangement at all for the landing of the army at Santvliet?—No detailed arrangement certainly; I did not conceive it was a thing that could be made; before I sailed I had no precise knowledge where we should be to land, or the nature of the landing place, till it was reconnoitred, or whether the corps would arrive together or separately.



Did your lordship receive any directions from the secretary of state to make such arrangement?—I do not recollect any.

To what period of time did your lordship allude, when you stated that you do not conceive there was any force collected in Antwerp which would expose the army to imminent hazard?—I have I think said already, that at no time was there a force that could have exposed the army to imminent danger if kept together; but if divided for operations on each bank of the river, or employed in siege, I think it would have been exposed to imminent risk, except in the very early period after our arrival there.

Taking as the basis of the calculation, four days from the Downs to Bathz, would not the last part of the armament which sailed from the Downs on the 30th of July have arrived at Bathz on the 2d of August?—It probably would.

If the communication had been cut off with Cadsand before the enemy sent any reinforcements across to Flushing, would it not have been possible to have withdrawn from Walcheren a part even of sir Eyre Coote's force, originally destined for the reduction of that island, for the purpose of employing such part in the execution of the ultimate objects of the armament, without occasioning the discontinuance of the siege of Flushing?—I think a small portion might have been withdrawn; but I think there was a larger garrison in Flushing even before any arrived from Cadsand than I had expected to have found there.

Did not the considerable reinforcements which the enemy threw into Flushing from Cadsand, increase the garrison to the amount of about 8,000 men?—I believe they did.

Did not this circumstance render the employment of the whole force of sir Eyre Coote's original corps in the siege of Flushing indispensable?—It did.

Did not this circumstance also, make it advisable to employ additional troops in that service, with a view to accelerating the fall of the fortress, if such additional troops could not at the time be employed in the execution of the ultimate object of the army?—I thought that it certainly would accelerate the fall of the place, and I also thought that by a larger corps being employed, the corps under sir Eyre Coote would be considerably less harassed, and of course more fit to engage in

ulterior operations; and that induced me to land an additional corps of troops, but it was done under an idea that the fleet could not at that moment have passed up the Scheldt.

Notwithstanding this latter consideration, namely the acceleration of the reduction of Flushing, did your lordship, anxious for the accomplishment of the ulterior objects of the Expedition, and feeling that sir Eyre Coote's original corps was equal to the reduction of Flushing (although not so speedily as if it was stronger) determine to withdraw from Walcheren the additional troops that had been landed there, the moment the naval means should be ready to forward them to Bathz?—I certainly must have taken my decision upon that point, from a consideration of the circumstances at the moment; but I think I certainly should have withdrawn them the moment the armament could proceed up the Scheldt; possibly they need not have been withdrawn for two or three days so soon as the rest, for probably before the time the ordnance horses, &c. could have landed, this corps might have joined the rest of the army, but very probably I should have withdrawn them in the first instance.

In consequence of the admiral's communication to your lordship on the 8th of August, relative to naval co-operation in the reduction of Flushing, did any thing pass between your lordship and the admiral upon that subject?—I had some conversation I think, with the admiral at that time upon the subject.

Will your lordship have the goodness to state what that conversation was?—I think the letter proposing that co-operation was the 8th of August; I saw sir Richard Strachan pretty frequently at that time, probably it was on the subsequent day, or perhaps the same day that conversation took place; the ships had not at that time come into the Scheldt, and the wind was contrary till the 11th, the batteries were to be opened on the 10th; I understood that sir Richard Strachan offered that co-operation in the event of the opening of the batteries not succeeding in taking the place: I remember stating to sir Richard Strachan that I had no doubt when the batteries were opened the place must fall, and that I had considerable doubts whether it would be worth risking any of the line of battle ships at that period, that it might have been of considerable importance at the commencement, if it would

have prevented the necessity of a siege altogether, but that at that time it was certain on the opening of the batteries the place must fall; in point of fact the ships did not pass from their anchorage till the 14th of August.

If the fleet could have gone up the Scheldt sooner, would your lordship have proceeded to attempt the ultimate object of the armament, without waiting for the reduction of Flushing; I mean after the originally projected plan of operations was frustrated by the necessity of carrying so considerable a part of the armament into the Roompot after the enemy had reinforced Flushing to so considerable an extent, and after additional troops had been landed to accelerate the reduction of that fortress?—I certainly should.

Is the Committee to understand, that the reason your lordship remained so long on Walcheren, and allowed those troops that were landed in addition to sir E. Coote's original corps to do so, was, that until the whole armament exclusive of sir E. Coote's force should arrive in the neighbourhood of Bathz, no operation against Antwerp could be undertaken; that the forwarding of the armament to that point depended solely upon the navy, and that the anxiety which your lordship felt upon this subject, arising from a conviction of the infinite importance of celerity towards final success, was from time to time communicated to the admiral in the urgent manner in which it was the indispensable duty of the commander in chief of the land forces to make such representation?—The corps under general Grosvenor, which was the additional corps landed, necessarily remained until the transports could arrive to carry them up the Scheldt; it was impossible for any operations of any sort to be undertaken till the armament was collected, particularly the cavalry and ordnance ships and the ships with the ammunition and with the provisions; and therefore until the whole was collected at Bathz, unquestionably I should say it was impossible for any operation whatever to have been undertaken, and therefore I remained for that reason at Walcheren; the corps which had been landed remained on shore also for the same reason: with respect to any communication I had to make to the admiral on the subject of expedition, I urged to him the necessity of expedition, and I had every reason to believe he was impressed with the same sentiment.

Did your lordship ever give any authority or instructions to lord Rosslyn or sir J. Hope, to concert and undertake any operation with the navy before you should arrive in person on South Beveland?—Sir J. Hope was landed for the execution of a particular service, which was merely to take the batteries, and to open a way for the fleet, and to collect the resources in provisions, cattle, and horses: I certainly never gave any orders to lord Rosslyn, who commanded there, after the landing of lord Huntley's division and his own, because it was impossible any operation of any sort or kind whatever could be undertaken till the ordnance ships with the ammunition and provisions could have been carried up the river.

Did the admiral communicate to your lordship the order he sent to sir R. Keats to concert operations with lord Rosslyn, and request of your lordship to give orders of a similar description to that general?—No, he did not; the letter from sir R. Keats to lord Rosslyn was communicated to me by his lordship.

Was every possible arrangement for the speedy execution of the projected plan of operations made by your lordship and your staff, in such a manner that if the naval means could have been employed, no delay would have happened on the part of the army?—There certainly was.

Had your lordship conceived that a part of the force in South Beveland could have been employed in advance to any useful purpose before the cavalry, artillery, &c. had arrived in the neighbourhood of Bathz, was it your lordship's intention to have gone there to have carried on such operations in person?—I should certainly have gone there the first moment possible for any operation of any sort to have taken place.

Did your lordship intend to withdraw any, and what part of the 6,000 men landed in the island of Walcheren, after the fall of Flushing, in order to employ the troops so withdrawn in the accomplishment of the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—I think that if the naval blockade had continued, which I suppose it would certainly have done, a part of that force might have been carried over to South Beveland, and set at liberty whatever corps had been landed there.

After the whole of the army had assembled at Bathz, did not all the intelligence your lordship received represent the works of Antwerp to be in such a

state, and the garrison so strong, as to make it impossible to take the place without a siege?—I think all the intelligence went to that effect.

Did not the intelligence at this period also state that the enemy had already collected between 30 and 40,000 men in Antwerp, Bergen-op-Zoom, Breda and that neighbourhood, including the force in Cadsand, that this force was daily increasing, and that every preparation was making to oppose our landing at Santvliet, also that extensive preparations were making between Santvliet and Antwerp?—That was certainly the substance of all the intelligence I received; I had no very distinct intelligence as to the extent of the preparations making to resist the landing at Santvliet, but I understood the enemy had constructed several batteries on the dyke; the inundations too were reported to be very considerable.

Did not this intelligence, and the sickness of the army, and your lordship's own reasoning as to the use the enemy must necessarily have made of the interval between your first arrival off Walcheren and the period to which I allude, to ameliorate the defences of Antwerp and the other forts, and to collect a considerable defensive force from all quarters, determine your lordship's judgment against the practicability of then attacking Antwerp?—They certainly did.

Did not your lordship on the 27th of Aug. assemble the lieut. generals of the army in a council of war, and is not their opinion now before the House?—I assembled the lieut. generals on the 27th of Aug., and I believe their opinion is before the House.

Did your lordship understand that the admiral differed from or concurred in that opinion?—I conceived, certainly, that the admiral concurred in the opinion, that nothing further could be attempted.

What induced your lordship to form that conjecture?—I received a letter from the admiral on the 27th, the day the council of war assembled, in which he distinctly stated that opinion.

Will your lordship have the goodness to produce the admiral's letter of the 27th of Aug.?—It is a letter stating the reasons of sir R. Strachan for desiring his letter to be sent home to the admiralty; it is in that letter he states a distinct opinion that no further operation could, with any prospect of success, be at that time undertaken. [His Lordship produced a copy of the letter, which was read.]

*Copy of Sir R. Strachan's Letter.*

*St. Domingo, Bathz, 27th Aug. 1809.*

"My lord; In consideration of your note I detain the cutter; there are two others waiting for orders besides this, but I remind you, you have not a week's provisions for the army, and we have not above four for the navy, which, when we come to divide with you, will reduce us to about ten days; it therefore becomes indispensably necessary I should call the attention of government to this circumstance, and I pray you to let me dispatch the vessel; two shall wait your dispatches. We are now at two-thirds allowance; the most serious consequences may arise from any delay, when you consider the vast number we have to victual, at least 70,000, I am sure your lordship will be of my way of thinking "that not a moment should be lost in communicating home." All I shall say is, that you don't propose to go on to Antwerp for the reason mentioned in your letter; and really when I consider the reduced state of the provisions, the encreasing sickness, and the encreasing power of the enemy, little success can be expected from any operation; unless it is the intention of our country to keep the army here to the accomplishment of the object, and reinforce it as circumstances may make necessary.—I should have been on shore, but am not well; but nothing should have prevented me, if I could have been at all useful: your lordship may rest assured that I shall be ready to do every thing you propose, and that the navy is at your disposal for every purpose to forward the public service. I have, &c.

(Signed R. J. STRACHAN.)

*"To his Excellency the Right Hon.  
the Earl of Chatham."*

"Your lordship might write a short letter; but pray don't prevent my sending the vessel home; I see the most serious consequences likely to arise, from the government being ignorant of the want of provisions."

Supposing the whole of the army destined for the operation against Antwerp, had reached Santvliet, so as to be ready for disembarkation on the 3d and 4th of Aug. has your lordship now any reason to think that your operations would not have been successful?—I think that would have depended very much upon whether Antwerp could have been taken without a siege; I should not think we should have

been in a situation at that time to have undertaken a regular siege; I beg to add also, that I considered, by the intelligence that I possessed, that the works had been repaired, and that it was not open of course to a *coup de main*.

Did the intelligence received about that period, the 3d and 4th of August, state that the works had then been repaired?—I had no intelligence to that effect so early as the 3d and 4th of August certainly; but I understood the question to be asked me, what my opinion now was.

From the information your lordship had received respecting the defences of Antwerp, is your lordship enabled to inform the Committee, whether there were any defences towards the river line?—I had no intelligence I think of any works on that side; there were many guns mounted upon the quays.

Is your lordship enabled to inform the Committee at about what time those batteries were erected?—I do not know of the construction of any batteries; I said that there were guns placed along the quays.

Supposing that the sea line was defenceless in the state in which it has been represented to be, and that the flotilla and gun boats had been enabled to proceed up as high as Antwerp, by possessing themselves of the forts which commanded the river, does your lordship imagine there would have been any great loss of time in getting immediate possession of the arsenal and town?—I do not know exactly how to answer that question; that question would be answered better, undoubtedly, by the naval officers; but I collected from them that it would be impossible for the ships or the flotilla to make any progress up the Scheldt, unless accompanied by the army in possession of both banks of the river.

Sir John Hope's division of the army having not only secured the whole of the enemy's works on South Beveland by the 2d of August, but the fort of Bathz having been evacuated, had our ships of war and flotilla been able to reach Bathz about the same time, how soon does your lordship imagine operations could have been undertaken against fort Lillo?—Operations could not have been undertaken against fort Lillo by sir John Hope's division: I do not apprehend any operation against fort Lillo could have been undertaken with any security until the whole of the army had been assembled at Bathz with the cavalry, artillery, &c.

VOL. XV.—*Appendix.*

Were there not found on Walcheren, South Beveland, and at Bathz a sufficient train of battering cannon, to wit, of 18 and 24 pounders, of 12 inch mortars and shot-shells, and ammunition of every description, ready to have attacked Lillo, had the measure been otherwise thought expedient?—I do not think they would have been available for the purpose, or that there would have been any means of moving them.

Had your lordship received any particular information respecting the nature of the works of fort Lillo, so as to be enabled to judge of the practicability of being enabled to land a force within a short distance of the works and under the cover of a very high embankment, to have erected batteries and to have destroyed the defences of the place without opening trenches or investing the place?—I understood that fort Lillo was in a good state and would of course require a siege to take possession of it; being a casemated work, I believe it could only be attacked by making regular approaches upon the dyke; it was in that way it was attacked when it was taken before.

Had our flotilla and ships of war commanded the river immediately below fort Lillo so as to have protected the landing of the troops within from 1 to 200 yards of the works, and to have taken possession of the embankment, could not batteries have been erected upon that embankment, and at the same time gun-boats and mortars operating against the place, have probably obtained possession of it in the course of a very few days?—I do not conceive that fort Lillo could have been reduced by such means, or that any such attack as that spoken of was in any respect practicable. I understand to be stated, that the landing was to be made within 200 yards of the guns of the fort; which I take to be clearly impossible.

From what circumstances does your lordship suppose it to be impossible, supposing that we were in possession of the river, and that there is a large high embankment not commanded by the works of the fort, the fort containing only 1,000 men, to have landed 4 or 5,000 men?—I apprehend this was a work which could not be taken without regular approaches; and I never heard of approaches being commenced at 200 yards from a place.

Is not the only reason for commencing approaches at a distance the protection of the troops, and if those troops could be

equally well protected by landing under an embankment; if the attacking army could be covered at the distance even of 50 yards, would not that be a very desirable situation?—I do not think anything of that kind would have been practicable; in my opinion it was quite impossible.

Upon the receipt of sir Richard Strachan's letter of the 27th of Aug. did your lordship call upon the commissary general of the army for a report of the state of the provisions, and did it correspond with the estimate sir Richard Strachan had given of their amount?—I certainly thought it my duty to lose no time in looking into the subject, not being at all aware of that being the case, and I found it entirely erroneous, for that there were a month's provisions for the troops.

Has your lordship reason to know that it was deliberately deemed most advisable for the public service that the supply of provisions should be progressively forwarded to the army, so as not to encumber their movements with a greater proportion of provisions at any one time than the public service could possibly require?—I understood that to be the intention; and in point of fact, we always had a sufficient supply of provisions.

Does your lordship recollect a passage in your journal of the 19th of August, wherein it is said, "Lord Chatham's intention to remove his head quarters to Goes and South Beveland on the following day, was communicated to lieutenant general the earl of Rosslyn, but he was obliged to defer his departure till the day following on account of some urgent arrangement to be taken, which arose out of his last dispatches from England;" it appears from the printed papers, that the last dispatch was dated the 12th of August; will your lordship have the goodness to state what were those arrangements to be taken, which arose out of your last dispatches from England?—I think as well as I can recollect the circumstance which prevented my going on that day, was with respect to making some very particular enquiries as to the obtaining of further quantities of money in the islands of Walcheren and South Beveland; the nature of the arrangement, was an arrangement with the commissary general; to the best of my recollection there was a dispatch to the commissary general.

In the early part of your lordship's examination this evening, you mentioned a

memorandum of instructions you had received from lord Castlereagh, dated about the 23d of June, besides the instructions under the sign manual; has your lordship any copy of that memorandum?—I have no copy of that memorandum; it was not an instruction communicated to me, but a draft of a projected instruction as I understood sent for me to look at.

Did that memorandum form the basis of the instruction your lordship did receive?—I think it was rather more at large, but it exactly corresponded with the instruction I did receive; I only saw it as a memorandum.

Does your lordship recollect having been at his Majesty's levee on the 4th of October?—I do not recollect, but I think it extremely likely that I was; I should rather think I was.

Does your lordship recollect having had at that time at the King's levee in your hand a paper purporting to be an account of the transactions of the force under your lordship's command in Zealand?—I am most perfectly sure that I had no such paper whatever, if I was there on the 4th, which I believe I was; my paper which I had in my hand was the monthly return of the ordnance department.

Does your lordship recollect having delivered to his Majesty any Narrative of the proceedings in Zealand on the 15th of Jan.?—I did not deliver any Narrative of the proceedings in Zealand to his Majesty, but I transmitted it to his Majesty at Windsor on the 15th of January.

Was that Narrative accompanied by any letter?—It was not accompanied by any letter; there was a note of transmission; a note to colonel Taylor I think.

Has your lordship any copy of that note?—I have not.

Does your lordship recollect having applied for that Narrative to be returned to your lordship by his Majesty?—I remember having expressed a wish to his Majesty, at the levee, on the 7th of Feb. I think, that he would have the goodness to return that Narrative, because I wished to make some alteration, to leave out a passage there was in it; and it was so returned.

Did your lordship receive that Narrative back on the 10th, and in what manner?—It was either on the 9th or the 10th, I think it was on the 10th I received it back; it was merely sent back with a note from colonel Taylor, saying he had the King's command to send it back; but nothing else.

Did your lordship tender the Narrative again to the King on the 14th of Feb.?—I did.

Was it given by his Majesty at the same levee at which it was tendered by your lordship; to his Majesty to the secretary of state?—It was not given at the levee; it was given at an audience after the levee; and I received his Majesty's command to give it to the secretary of state, which I did immediately.

Without its passing into his Majesty's hand?—Yes, his Majesty desired I would give it to the secretary of state.

Has your lordship any copy of the Narrative as it was communicated to his Majesty on the 15th of Jan.?—I have not.

Can your lordship state the substance of the alteration?—I really do not think, especially after so long an examination as I have now gone through, that I can recollect perfectly the substance, it was a passage towards the close of the report, which contained rather matter of opinion or speculation, or rather discussion, which I thought would be better out of the report; and I asked his Majesty's permission to leave that passage out of the report, which I did. I do not think, after so long an examination, I could take upon me to state the substance of that passage, or to recollect it; but it related only to matter of opinion, and was only one passage, which I thought would not accord in any respect with the rest of the Narrative, which was merely a statement of facts.

Does your lordship recollect the purport of the note which accompanied the Narrative when it was first delivered on the 15th of Jan.?—It was a note of transmission, sending the Narrative to colonel Taylor for the King.—[His lordship was directed to withdraw.]

The Chairman was directed to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

After some time the Committee was resumed.

Lieut. General Sir EYRE COOTE, K. B. called in;—Examined by the Committee.

Have the goodness to state what were the Instructions under which you sailed?—I have them to present to the Committee.—[Sir Eyre Coote delivered in his Instructions; which were read.]

Secret. *Horse Guards, 17th July 1809.*

"Sir; By direction of lieut. general the earl of Chatham, I have the honour to

transmit for your information the outline of a disposition for the attack of Walcheren and the possession of South Beveland, which has been approved by his lordship. It is of course subject to such alteration as better intelligence and the actual state of the enemy and other circumstances may render necessary at the moment of carrying the operation into execution. I also inclose a memorandum containing all the information I am in possession of respecting the island of Walcheren, together with extracts from a recent reconnoissance made of the defences on Cadsand by captain Paisley of the royal engineers. I have, &c.

Lieut. Gen. Sir Eyre Coote, K. B. ROB. BROWNRIGG, Q. M. G."

Will you state at what time you took the command of the forces upon the island of Walcheren?—I was ordered to Portsmouth on the 30th of June; and on the 2d of July I took the command of the troops at Portsmouth who were destined to the attack of the island of Walcheren.

At what time were you left in command of the troops that were in the island of Walcheren?—On the 10th of Sept. lord Chatham delivered over the command of the troops in the island of Walcheren to me.

At what time were you first instructed to make enquiries respecting the possibility of retaining the island of Walcheren?—I do not recollect that I received any particular instructions to that effect.

What were your instructions when lord Chatham quitted the island of Walcheren?—I had no particular instructions but to remain there in the command of the troops; the general order appointing me to remain in the island was the principal instruction that I received on that head.

Among the papers printed there is a report transmitted by you of the number of men which you thought would be necessary for the defence of Walcheren and the other measures that would be necessary to be taken for its protection; was that report made in consequence of any instructions or any communication received by you?—The letter that I wrote to lord Chatham was sent by me of my own accord to his lordship.

You had received no instructions from lord Chatham to make those enquiries and to furnish him with such a report?—Not particular instructions; in communications with lord Chatham we often conversed touching the number of men that would be necessary to remain in Wal-

cheren, and we also conversed touching the situation of the sick.

Did lord Chatham at no time communicate to you that he had received instructions from lord Castlereagh to submit to him a report respecting the means of maintaining Walcheren?—I think he did.

Was it in consequence of that communication that you made this report?—No.

What was the inducement which led you at that time to make this report?—In consequence of the very difficult situation in which I thought I should be placed, and for fear that any untoward circumstance should occur so as to render my situation and that of the troops extremely precarious and difficult.

What were the difficulties of situation which you apprehended?—In case of an attack from the enemy I thought it was but justice due to myself and to the troops to state my opinion with respect to the situation in which I was placed in the island of Walcheren; I also thought it was my duty so to do.

Have the goodness to state what was the situation of the island and of the troops at the time lord Chatham quitted it for England?—The troops were extremely unhealthy; a number of arrangements it would be of course necessary to make, should it be intended that the island of Walcheren should be retained.

Have the goodness to state what was the amount of preparation which you conceived would have been necessary for the defence of the island?—I stated my opinion in my letter to lord Chatham of the number of troops that I really at that time thought would be necessary to retain the island.

What was the number of troops you think would have been necessary to place the island in a state of complete security?—I do not say that even the number that I stated in my letter, videlicet, 20,000, would be sufficient, because it is impossible for me to say what number of troops might attack the island; but I suppose that 20,000 men would have been sufficient for the security of the island at that time.

By the words "at that time," do you mean at that moment only, or do you mean to speak prospectively for the remainder of the campaign, or for what period?—In the view I took of the island, and of the probable force of the enemy at that time, I really thought 20,000 might answer the purpose.

You state also that considerable addi-

tional fortifications were necessary; can you give the Committee any idea of the extent or magnitude of the fortifications which you would have thought indispensably necessary?—I cannot exactly say what the engineers might have imagined necessary in all parts of the island; but it certainly was my opinion that very considerable fortifications would have been necessary, such as towers in different parts of the island, the works at Flushing, Veer and Rammekins repaired, and batteries in different parts of the island on the coast.

Do you think that even with the addition of the batteries it would have been possible, at all seasons and under all circumstances, to have prevented an enemy of greatly superior number from crossing the Slough passage?—Not unless the navy guarded the Slough passage.

Was it not your opinion that in winter the navy could not remain in the Slough passage, and that the batteries of the enemy might at all times force our smaller vessels from the Slough passage?—I understood, from high naval authority, that in winter the vessels could not remain without great difficulty in the Slough passage; it certainly would have been very difficult for the navy to have remained in the Slough passage at any time, had a large force been brought against them from the dyke in the island of South Beveland.

Is it your opinion that even if those preparations had been made, still the island would have been exposed to attack from a very superior land force?—The island, no doubt, would be exposed; but it is to be supposed that every possible exertion being made in erecting towers, fortifications, &c. which it might be deemed necessary to place round the island, the island would be in a tolerable state of security, at least to be retained for a space of time; it is impossible for me to say to what period.

Do you think that even with a garrison of 20,000 men the island could have been retained without those fortifications being completed?—I do not.

Would not those fortifications have required considerable time as well as great expenditure for their construction?—Certainly.

Is the Committee to understand, that till that time had elapsed, and that expenditure been completed, the island would have been exposed to be retaken

had the French directed their principal force to that object?—The island would have been in considerable danger.

At the time you were left in command of the island, state what was the situation of your garrison, what portion of them were or were not effective?—I really have not the returns at present with me; but I believe they are upon the table.

At any time subsequent to lord Chatham's return into England, did you feel that with the garrison that you commanded in the state in which they were, you could rely upon that garrison with security for the defence of the island?—I could always rely upon the bravery of the troops I commanded; but they were in too sickly a state to expect that I could have much reliance upon them in the event of a serious attack.

From the time the disease first shewed itself, did not the number of the sick increase progressively until the order was received for the evacuation of Walcheren?—I cannot state after I myself left the island, which was some weeks previous to the evacuation; but from the period of lord Chatham's departure the sickness amongst the troops gradually increased to an alarming degree.

At any time during that period did you see the slightest probability that that sickness would be arrested in its progress?—No.

Was it not apparent to you that that fine garrison was gradually wasting, with a probability, that before the end of the sickly season there would be scarcely a battalion fit for active service?—I had but one battalion that I could call effective and fit for active service.

Was it ever suggested by you or to you, whether it might be possible to keep, during that season, the greater part of the garrison embarked, landing only, except on emergencies, such as were necessary for peculiar duties?—I do not recollect that it was.

After you had transmitted your report, with respect to the means of defending the island, did you receive any communications on the subject of that report?—My letter to the secretary of state was dated on the 17th of September; I received an answer on the 27th, which answer was dated on the 24th.

In that answer was any further enquiry made with respect to the detail of the means by which Walcheren could be defended, or was it ever communicated to

you, whether it was intended to retain Walcheren or not?—All the answers that I received are upon the table of the Committee.

Then it never was communicated to you whether it was the intention of government or not to retain the island of Walcheren after that period?—I have already answered that question in my former answer; I received no communications officially but what are now upon the table of the Committee; other official letters were received by me, but not touching the question which has been put to me.

Had it been the determination of government to retain the island of Walcheren, is it not your opinion that no time was to be lost in taking the measures of defence which you had suggested?—Certainly; I think that no time was to be lost.

Do you know whether at any time, the sick of the army suffered material inconvenience from the want of medicines, proper comforts, and proper attendance?—Medical officers were much wanted; comforts were procured, as far they could be got in the island; medicines were also procured in the island; bark was bought in the island.

Do you know whether, at any time at any place, there was an actual want of medicine?—I am not prepared to say there was an actual want of medicine; but I wish perfectly to be understood that my reason for making the application for medical aid and medicines and comforts was to prevent the absolute want; it was not for me to make that application when there was none in the island.

State whether great inconvenience was not felt from the want of a sufficient number of hospital ships?—Inconvenience was felt; for had we had hospital ships, the convalescents would have been put on board; two arrived in the first instance, and I believe two more, all of which we employed; and others did arrive, in which ships troops were put on board and sent to England sick.

Have you ever formed any estimate, either more or less accurate, of the probable expence of putting Walcheren into the state of defence to which you allude?—I did not form any estimate.

When you speak of hospital ships, do you mean hospital ships or what are called convalescent ships; were they ships prepared expressly for the purpose of sick



men remaining in them, or only to carry sick men home?—I think the Asia and Bullwer were sent out as hospital ships; I believe at least so it was reported to me that they were fitted up as hospital ships: others were sent out, the Leyden and some others (I really do not recollect the names) to take sick men to England.

You have spoken of a conversation you had with lord Chatham previously to your taking the command on his lordship's returning to England; in that conversation did you give to lord Chatham, any distinct opinion as to the possibility of retaining the island of Walcheren?—In conversation with lord Chatham, though I do not recollect at this time the very words that I used, I most certainly did say to his lordship that it would require a number of men to retain possession of the island of Walcheren, according to my ideas.

Did lord Chatham state to you in that conversation, or at any other time, what he conceived to be the intention of his Majesty's ministers with respect to retaining the island of Walcheren?—As well as I can recollect, lord Chatham did not say any thing to me with respect to the intention of his Majesty's ministers as to retaining the island of Walcheren.

Was it your opinion that at the time you took the command in Walcheren, it was necessary some immediate determination should be made as to the retaining or evacuating the island of Walcheren?—It was not for me to say what was the intention of his Majesty's ministers; but I myself conceived that it would be well done to come to a determination whether we were to keep possession of the island, or whether we were to evacuate the island.

Is it your opinion, that for the good of the service it was absolutely necessary to lose no time in coming to such determination?—I certainly conceived, as I stated in my former answer, it would be well done to come to a determination; it is not for me to judge what was the intention of his Majesty's ministers; but as far as my opinion went, it is better at all times to come to a decision.

In the particular situation in which you found yourself when you took the command in Walcheren, was it not in your opinion necessary to come to some immediate determination, as to the propriety of retaining or evacuating it?—I really think I have answered that question; but I have

no hesitation whatever in saying, I think it would have been well done to determine whether the island was to be retained or not to be retained.

In the particular situation in which you found yourself when you took the command at Walcheren, was it not, in your opinion, necessary to come to some immediate determination, as to the propriety of retaining or evacuating it?—I really can give no other answer; I should have been extremely glad that an immediate determination had been come to, for the reason stated in a letter now before the Committee.

Is the Committee to understand it was necessary for the service, in your opinion, that some immediate determination should be come to?—I repeat; it would have been well done to come to an immediate determination.

Would it not, in that case, have been particularly well done?—No doubt.

You have spoken of the necessity of erecting a variety of fortifications on the island of Walcheren, if it was proposed to retain it, what length of time do you think it would have taken to construct such fortifications as would have put that island in a state of defence, so as to enable us to retain it during the winter?—I do not think it possible for me to answer that question, unless I knew what materials, &c. were wanted; I do not see that I could even hazard an opinion; it no doubt would take some time.

In your opinion, would it have taken three months?—Most certainly.

Then the Committee is to understand, that if, when towards the end of October it was determined to evacuate Walcheren, it had been determined to retain Walcheren, it would have required three months to have put it in such a state that it could have been retained?—I by no means wish to be understood, that I limited myself to three months; I only said that three months would be necessary at least.

How much more than three months do you think?—It is impossible for me to say.

Had you any conversation with the naval officers, by which you were led to form an opinion as to the practicability of defending Walcheren in the winter by a naval force?—Admiral Otway has told me that he thought it would be very difficult, because the ships would be obliged probably in bad weather to go into the basin.

Consistently with that opinion of admiral Otway's, and with your observations, do you believe that if at the end of October in the then state of the fortifications of the island it had been determined to retain Walcheren, there was a probability that we should have been able to have done it?—Unless all our means were used, it would have been impossible to retain the island if attacked.

From what you observed of the preparations of the enemy, do you doubt that it would have been attacked?—It is impossible for me to say what the enemy would have done; the enemy were preparing.

From what you saw of the preparations of the enemy, is it your opinion that an attack from the French and Dutch was to be expected?—If the French and Dutch found an opportunity of attacking Walcheren, no doubt they would have done it, at least I think so.

Consistently with the opinion of admiral Otway and the state of the force you left in Walcheren, do you not think it most probable that in the course of the winter the enemy would have found an opportunity of attacking Walcheren?—If they could have done it, I make no doubt they would; I think I have answered that in my former answer.

Is it your opinion that they could have done it?—If there was not a sufficient force in the island to oppose them, of course they could.

With the force you left in the island when you left it, is it or is it not your opinion that they could have attacked it with a reasonable prospect of success?—If they had attacked the island and succeeded in landing, certain it is that we had not troops sufficient to oppose them, in consequence of their sickly state.

At what time did you return to England?—I think I gave up the command to general Don on the 29th of October.

Were you on your arrival in England consulted by his Majesty's ministers on the propriety of retaining the island of Walcheren?—His Majesty's ministers asked me some questions touching the situation of the island of Walcheren.

What was the substance of those questions as well as you can recollect them?—To the best of my recollection the questions tended to the situation of the sick in the island of Walcheren, and towards the necessity of sending reinforcements to the island of Walcheren; those I think were the material questions.

In that conversation with his Majesty's ministers, did you learn that it was or was not their intention to keep possession of the island of Walcheren?—I did; that it was their intention to evacuate the island of Walcheren.

Did you understand how long that determination to evacuate the island of Walcheren had been taken?—To the best of my recollection I did not.

If you understood that it was the intention of his Majesty's ministers to evacuate the island of Walcheren, with what view do you conceive them to have spoken respecting reinforcements to be sent out to Walcheren?—With a view of securing the retreat of the troops from the island, should the enemy have landed on the island to endeavour to cut off their retreat.

Then the Committee is to understand that without reinforcements being sent out to Walcheren, in the then state of the island it was judged to be in danger from the enemy?—I did not say that the island at that time was in danger from the enemy; I mean the enemy's landing on the island; but I said that the idea of sending reinforcements from this country was in case the enemy should have known of our retiring from Walcheren, and have endeavoured to have landed to cut us off.

Were not several artificers, together with the materials for building, sent over from this country during a part of the time you commanded at Walcheren?—A few artificers arrived, and I believe some bricks, the quantity I do not know.

Was it during your command in Walcheren intended to erect barracks to hold the troops?—Barracks were to be repaired, but I knew of no intention of building barracks.

Are you able to form any estimate of the probable expence which would have attended those proposed repairs?—I am not.

Have you heard since what that estimate was?—Not to my recollection.

After the fall of Flushing, were not the fortifications of Flushing repaired at considerable expence, and put into a much better state than before?—They were daily repairing at a certain expence.

Up to what time did those repairs go on?—When I left the island, I believe, they still continued; I cannot answer for any thing that passed after I quitted the island.

Were any new outworks thrown up during the time you were in the island?—Batteries were raised in several parts of the island.

Were those batteries finished, or throwing up, at the time you left the island, or had they all been finished before?—Some were finished, some were erecting.

Is the Committee to understand that any works of any kind were constructing for the defence of the coast of Walcheren or Flushing at the time you left the command of the island?—I have already stated that batteries were erecting along the coast, some had been finished, the defences of Flushing were also repairing.

Were you consulted, previously to the sailing, upon the Expedition, as to the mode by which the object of it was to be carried into effect?—I was not consulted, but I had conversations.

Was your opinion ever taken as to the plan by which it was proposed to attack Antwerp?—Not to my recollection.

Did you ever give any opinion upon that subject?—No, not officially.

In what form did you give any opinion?—In private communication or conversation I have stated, that the best mode in my mind of attacking Antwerp was by going up the West Scheldt. I must however remark, that I really thought very little upon the subject, for my attention was solely taken up with the operation that was to be entrusted to my care.

Do you recollect the number of sick that the two hospital ships were capable of holding?—The two ships to which I alluded, were placed as convalescent ships, off Ramakins; I do not know the number of men that both would contain, but we did put on board these ships from 250 to 300 men; the reason of our putting so few convalescents on board those two ships, was to give the men better accommodation; if we had put on board as many men as the ships could contain, they would not have been so comfortable, and it was subsequently found expedient, to diminish the original number put on board.

What number of men do you suppose of the sick in Walcheren it would have been desirable to embark in ships of that description, if the ships had been present to be so occupied?—The principal medical officer wished to have tried the experiment, and to have put as many men (convalescents) as he conveniently could have managed on board different ships; that experiment was tried, and it failed.

Have you ever known such a number of hospital ships attached to an army as would have afforded accommodation to the sick at that time in Walcheren?—I

really myself never have known the exact number of hospital ships attached to an army; it has not come within my knowledge.

Do you remember, during your command, when the first proportion of sick was sent from Walcheren to the hospitals at home?—I have a return in my hand of the number of convalescents of the different corps of the army that were sent to England from the island of Walcheren during the time I was there.

When was the first embarkation of sick?—On the 16th of September.

What was the number you then sent to England?—Four hundred and nine.

Did you receive a recommendation from the medical officers under your command at any earlier period with respect to the expediency of removing any part of the sick to England?—The medical officer at the head of the department was extremely anxious to send the sick to England, and he took the first opportunity when there were ships ready to embark the men.

Did you understand that any requisition had been made to the agent of transports for accommodation for the reception of sick to go to England which he was not enabled at the time to comply with?—There were periods that we were in want of ships to take the sick men to England.

Was any request made prior to the 16th of September for tonnage which could not be complied with?—As regularly as the ships arrived so they were reported to the deputy quarter master general, and the sick men were embarked as soon as it conveniently could be done after that report was made.

Did you not consider as commander of the island of Walcheren you had authority to send the sick to England on the representation of the medical officers under your command without waiting for orders from home?—I did so in the first instance without waiting for orders.

Previously to the sailing of the Expedition did you understand the prevailing opinion of the general officers and other military men consulted upon that occasion to be in favour or otherwise of the probability of success in the attack on Antwerp?—I never heard of those opinions until after the sitting of the Committee of Enquiry.

What is your own opinion upon that subject?—I thought the probability of success was doubtful and the attempt hazardous.

Do you know any military man whose opinion was favourable to that enterprize?—I had so little communication upon the subject that I really did not hear opinions.

State to the Committee whether in the landing of the men on the night of the 30th of July there was any loss whatever?—There was none reported to me.

Were there any seamen and marines under the denomination of the marine brigade attached to the army under your command?—There was a corps of seamen under the command of captain Richardson attached to the army before Flushing, and I understood that a battalion of marines were landed at Veer.

Were the seamen employed in drawing up the field pieces and ammunition belonging to the division of the army under your command?—They were.

Were the seamen afterwards employed in erecting any particular battery, or generally employed in erecting the batteries for the siege of Flushing?—The seamen were generally employed in dragging the guns to the batteries, and at one particular battery the seamen worked I believe one or two nights.

When the batteries were opened before Flushing was not one of the batteries manned by seamen?—Yes.

Do you recollect any instance of your making any application to admiral Otway or any officer of the navy antecedent to the commencement of firing upon Flushing, which was not immediately complied with?—The officer who commanded the seamen was captain Richardson of the royal navy; with him alone to the best of my recollection I had communication, and he at all times gave me every possible assistance in his power.

Do you recollect when lord Gardner's squadron anchored in Dykeshook Bay?—I do not.

When the line of battle ships passed Flushing do you think that their fire had any particular effect upon the town of Flushing?—Their fire did a great deal of mischief to the town.

Did the fire from the bombs and the flotilla answer all the expectations that you formed of it in the effect it produced upon the town of Flushing?—The ships and the bombs destroyed a great many houses in the town, and did a great deal of mischief.

Generally speaking do you think that the fire from the ships and vessels accelerated the fall of Flushing?—The line-of-

battle ships to the best of my recollection did not come up till the 14th, and the town capitulated, I think, early on the morning of the 15th.

You have stated that without the fortifications proposed you do not think 20,000 men would have been sufficient to defend the island; was not the island principally secured by the navy?—The island was certainly principally secured by the navy.

Were there not ample means of naval defence?—During the time I commanded at Walcheren there were ample means of naval defence.

You have stated from the authority of admiral Otway, that the navy could not be expected to remain in the Slough passage during the winter; was it the ice that was to prevent that?—I should wish to be understood that I never intended to say that admiral Otway said they could not remain, but that it would be difficult: admiral Otway did not by any means intimate to me the Slough passage alone, but also the other parts of the harbour towards Flushing where the vessels could not remain at anchor if the weather was bad; floating ice of course he included.

Did you understand that the Slough passage was in ordinary seasons frozen over, so that troops could pass?—I have been informed that the Slough passage is very seldom frozen over.

So that if the naval means of defence were driven by the severity of the weather out of the Slough passage, there would be no possibility of attack from the enemy over the Slough passage, unless they came in ships or vessels?—If the Slough passage was not frozen over, of course if they did attempt to land in Walcheren, they must come in boats or vessels.

When the weather was so bad as to prevent the British ships lying or sailing in the Scheldt or the Slough passage, would it not also have prevented the enemy's ships from doing the same?—Certainly.

Were not the houses in Flushing particularly very much damaged by the bombardment of the town?—They were.

Were they not in want of very great repair in order to keep the sick that were in them dry and warm?—Certainly.

Was it not then necessary for the comfort of the sick, that measures should be taken for the repairing their habitations?—Certainly.

Were not the artificers sent over with (2 D)

that view, to assist in those repairs?—They were sent over, as I understood, with a view of assisting in those repairs, and also of repairing the barracks for the accommodation of the troops.

Are there not some large East India warehouses in Middleburg?—Yes.

Were they occupied by the sick?—They were.

With respect to the conversations regarding the reinforcements, if the evacuation of the island had been absolutely determined upon, was it possible it could have been evacuated till the sick were removed, without leaving them to fall into the hands of the enemy?—I should have thought it highly culpable to have left the sick to fall into the hands of the enemy.

Were there then, without incurring that high degree of culpability, any means of retreating from Flushing till the sick were removed?—The sick must first be removed.

Was there any delay in removing the sick?—I was not present at the evacuation of the island, and consequently I cannot answer that question.

During the period you staid there, was not every means taken that the ships afforded of sending home the sick?—I have already answered that question by stating that as soon as the ships arrived and were reported to me, the sick were put on board and sent to England.

Were any sick sent to England in ordinary transports, not fitted up particularly for the accommodation of sick passengers?—Several small transports were sent from England, and sick were put on board those transports.

There was little or no sickness in the navy?—I have been given to understand that the sickness in the navy was confined to the men who had been on shore.

If there had been for any short period a want of bark, would it not have been easy to procure it from the ships of the line round the island?—Bark was bought by my order in Middleburg; I made no application to the ships for bark as long as I could procure it without troubling the navy.

If you had not been able to have found sufficient quantity within the island, you would of course have resorted to the navy?—At that moment it did not occur to me, but no doubt I should have applied to admiral Otway for it.

Do you conceive at the time you gave

up the command of Walcheren, that the town and defences of Flushing were more defensible than when the English army under your command attacked it?—The defences had been repairing, and were certainly in a better state.

From the preparations which the enemy were making, which you had an opportunity of witnessing, do you conceive if they had made an attack on Walcheren at the time you gave up the command, the probability would have been that the enemy would have succeeded in that attack?—I never saw any preparations making; I only supposed preparations were making, from the reports that were made to me; if the enemy had attacked the troops in the island of Walcheren, the probability is that the army was so sickly, that every misfortune must have been apprehended.

Had you any means of ascertaining the extent of the preparations of the enemy to have attacked Walcheren?—None, but by reports.

Without being able to ascertain the extent of the preparations of the enemy towards an attack on Walcheren, is it possible for you to form any opinion either as of the probability of an attack being made at all, or the probability of success of such an attack if made?—I cannot suppose that the enemy would have attacked Walcheren, unless they attacked it in such numbers as to insure to them some probability of success.

In a dispatch of your's, dated the 29th of Sept. from Middleburg, it is stated that there was at that time only 300 pounds of powder of bark in store, and that that was not more than sufficient to answer the consumption of four or five days; how soon after the date of that letter did any bark arrive?—I never transmitted a letter touching the situation of the sick to the secretary of state without having had a communication that day with the principal officer of the medical department; the letter from the principal officer of the medical department I have to produce; and in consequence of the receipt of that letter, I wrote my letter to the secretary of state of the 29th of September. [Sir E. Coote delivered in the letter, and it was read.]

*Middleburgh, Sept. 29, 1809.*

"Sir; The apothecary to the forces in charge of medical stores, having represented that only 300 pounds of powder of bark is now remaining in store: as this

will hardly be sufficient to answer the demands for more than four or five days, I have to request you will be pleased to obtain the authority of lieut. general sir E. Coote for the immediate purchase of 400 lbs. of this article.—I have, &c.

*Lieut. Col. Walsh,* FRANCIS BURROWS,  
"Military Sec., &c." As. Inspect. of H."

How soon after the date of this letter was the arrival of any bark reported to you?—I cannot answer from my own knowledge; but the principal medical officer informed me that 800 pounds of bark arrived on the 11th of October; more arrived on the 17th, the 18th, the 20th and the 27th.

Then it appears that 12 days after the date of your letter of the 29th of Sept. in which it was stated there is not more than four or five days consumption of bark in store; namely, on the 11th of Oct. 800 pounds of bark arrived, do you know how the garrison was supplied with bark in the mean time?—A great deal of bark was purchased in the island by my order; I cannot state the date when the purchase was made, but as often as the application was made to me by the principal medical officers, so often I directed them to purchase bark wherever it could be procured.

Were any complaints of want of medical comforts made to you?—Porter and port wine and comforts for the sick men were bought by my order; the applications I have to shew to the Committee if they wish it.

Were the sick well supplied with bedding and blankets?—I ordered 2 blankets to be issued to every soldier in the island; they made use of course in the hospitals of those blankets and of as much bedding as we could procure; all the bedding from the quarter master general's department that I could find, was also issued to the sick men.

Was there a sufficiency of blankets and bedding for the sick?—I understood in the first instance that there was not; but towards the latter part there was a sufficient number of blankets and bedding I believe was procured.

In visiting the hospitals did you find that they were sufficiently accommodated with bedding and blankets?—The day after lord Chatham left the island, I visited the numerous sick, and I certainly found many in want of bedding, which was procured as well as it could be got.

Do you know whether lord Chatham visited the hospitals before his departure?—I do not know.

On your subsequent visits to the hospitals, did you find the sick sufficiently accommodated with bedding and blankets?—To the best of my knowledge towards the latter part of my command the troops were supplied with bedding and blankets.

Were they in the first part of your command well supplied?—Certainly not.

Do you know that many of the sick among the troops suffered severely from having no accommodation but their great coats during their sickness?—I do not.\*

Were any requisitions made to the navy to assist with bedding and blankets any deficiency that existed in the army?—I am not quite certain as to that point, but I believe the principal medical officer did make an application of that kind.

Can you inform the Committee, whether any of the soldiers, who were in health, were put on board vessels as a means of preventing the sickness?—That was impossible; for had we put the healthy men on board, we should not have had men sufficient for the duty of the island.

Do you know how the army in Walcheren was supplied with water?—There were wells in the island; I never heard the complaint of want of water.

Did you ever hear a complaint of the quality of the water found in the island being hurtful to the troops?—I have heard individuals say that the water was bad; but I believe it will answer every purpose if I state that water was sent from England, and I applied to the principal medical officer to know what I had better do with that water, and by his advice I gave it to the navy.

The water sent from England was not used for the troops?—Certainly not.

Can you inform the Committee, whether you heard that it had been usual to remove the French troops when they had been in possession of the island of Walcheren to the Sand Hills on the northern part of the island, for the benefit of their health?—I have been informed that the French troops did use huts that were on the Sand Hills near West Cappel: That circumstance, with many others, did not escape my notice; I ordered col. Hay of the Royals, with a medical officer, to go and examine those huts, with a view to put the sick men or convalescents into them: col. Hay, with a medical officer, returned the next day, with a report to me that it would not be advisable to place sick men in those huts.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.

—The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

### 13.

*Jovis, 1<sup>o</sup> die Martii 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER, Bart. in the Chair.

The Right Hon. Lord Viscount CASTLEREAGH, a Member of the House.—Examined by the Committee.

Has your lordship brought with you the Memorandum alluded to in the evidence of lord Chatham?—I have; I should wish in delivering in this paper that the Committee would allow me to state the circumstances under which it is presented. Having been called upon to produce the "Memorandum," referred to in lord Chatham's evidence, I can have no objection to do so, but I do not apprehend it to be clothed with any strictly official character. The circumstances under which it was prepared I will state to the Committee: I think it was on the 21st of June last I received his Majesty's pleasure to proceed in the execution of the Expedition to the Scheldt; I immediately prepared a *Projet of Instructions*, which I communicated about the 23d of the same month to lieutenant-general the earl of Chatham, commander in chief of the land part of the operations, and had subsequent communications with his lordship on the plan of operations as therein described. At a later period I submitted to the consideration of his Majesty's government the more general instructions of the 16th of July, which were adopted, and to which his Majesty's sign manual was affixed. The *Projet of Instructions* which I now deliver in, although at the time communicated to his Majesty's ministers, I apprehend can only be considered as a Memorandum of the view which, as secretary of state for the war department, I personally entertained of the course that service was to take, and upon which I had official communication with the commander in chief of the army to be employed upon it. It contains the principle and outline of the service as it was at that time in my contemplation; and I rather believe correctly represents the general understanding which prevailed between his Majesty's government and the commander in chief, with respect to the mode in which it was to be

carried into execution, under the instructions of the 16th of July; but I do not consider the paper itself as having been formally sanctioned by his Majesty's government.

Did your lordship afterwards in any measure alter the view you then had of the subject?—There are two points which I should wish to state to the Committee, in which it was altered; the first, the point of Cadsand, subsequent to the receipt of the Report of the board of admiralty, bearing date the 19th of June, upon a representation of the importance, with a view of facilitating the entrance to the West Scheldt, of occupying Cadsand; a determination to that effect was taken. The other point on which a change of determination took place was, with respect to the orders that should be given as to the disposition of the army after the operations against Walcheren were terminated; in the Memorandum now delivered, the directions were to retain a position on the Scheldt until further orders from home; in the instructions of the 16th of July, the army was ordered to return immediately home on the termination of the service. The reason of that change was, that upon a full consideration of the general state of affairs at that moment, and particularly of the supply of foreign corn as applicable to service abroad, I did not conceive that the government was justified in contemplating the possibility of continuing a protracted course of service upon the continent; and in consequence of that and other considerations, a determination was taken to direct the army to return to England on the termination of the service, leaving an adequate garrison in the island of Walcheren for its security. [His lordship delivered in the Memorandums, (No. 1 and No. 2.) which were read.]

*Projet of Instructions, No. 1 and 2, communicated by Visc. Castlereagh to Lt. Gen. the Earl of Chatham; June 1809.*

#### No. 1.

Draft to the Earl of Chatham (Secret.)

*Downing-street, 1809.*

"My Lord; The importance of checking the naval power which the enemy is so rapidly accumulating in the Scheldt, and of making a powerful diversion in favour of the Austrian arms at the present moment, has determined his Majesty to direct the efforts of his naval and military forces to that quarter.—The accompany-

ing statement will inform your lordship of the amount of force of the respective services which has been ordered to proceed on this conjoint Expedition, the chief military direction of which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to confide to your lordship.—Although the effect that may be expected to be produced on the general scale of the war by the employment of a large British army, of not less than 40,000 men, in a quarter where the enemy has so many and such important interests at stake, has had a principal share in determining his Majesty's government to undertake the present enterprize, your lordship will consider the operation in question in its execution, as more immediately directed against the fleet and arsenals of France in the Scheldt.—The complete success of the operation would include the capture or destruction of the whole of the enemy's ships, either building at Antwerp or afloat in the Scheldt; the entire destruction of their yards and arsenals at Antwerp, Terneuse, and Flushing; and the rendering, if possible, the Scheldt no longer navigable for ships of war.—As the accomplishment of these important objects, in their fullest extent, must in a great measure depend upon the rapidity with which the enterprize is carried into execution, it has been deemed advisable to appropriate such an amount of force to this service as may enable you, at the same time that you occupy Walcheren and South Beveland, to advance at once a considerable corps against Antwerp, which may be reinforced so soon as Flushing is invested, if not actually reduced.—As the attainment of the entire of the objects which his Majesty has in view may ultimately be disappointed, should the enemy have the means of assembling in such strength upon Antwerp as to render perseverance on your lordship's part inconsistent with the security of your army, your lordship will in that case use your utmost endeavours, in concert with the navy, to secure as many of the objects above pointed out as the circumstances of the moment will permit; and as the possession of the island of Walcheren and the port of Flushing may in themselves, under certain contingencies, be acquisitions of the utmost consequence in the further prosecution of the war, I am to signify to your lordship the King's commands, that in the event of your being obliged to retire from the more advanced positions on the Scheldt, you do maintain

the island of Walcheren till his Majesty's further pleasure is signified.—I forbear to enter into any details with respect to the execution of the service with which your lordship is entrusted. These will more correctly suggest themselves to your lordship's military observation on the spot. There is only one case which I deem it necessary to provide for, namely, that of the service in all its parts having been completely effected, and the moment arrived when a decision must be taken, whether the army shall descend the Scheldt, or retain some position in advance.—In considering this important question, your lordship is aware that the state of the campaign on the continent does not, at the present moment, permit his Majesty's government to contemplate the possibility of commencing operations with a British army from a point so much in advance towards the frontier of France as Antwerp, neither is there any allied force as yet in the field in the North of Germany of sufficient magnitude, with whom an advance from thence could be combined; nor has it been deemed consistent with the celerity of movement, on which the success of the intended attack may depend, to send the army equipped upon a scale which would qualify it to enter immediately upon a campaign.—The Expedition must therefore be considered as not in the first instance assuming any other character than that of a *coup-de-main*, combining with it a powerful diversion against the enemy.—Whilst the operation is in progress, other prospects may open themselves, and events occur which may induce his Majesty's government to extend their views.—The proximity of the scene of action will, it is to be hoped, enable his Majesty's government to furnish your lordship in the progress of the service, with instructions immediately applicable to the circumstances of the moment, but your lordship will consider, in the event of such instructions not reaching you, that it is left throughout to your judgment, according to the movements of the enemy, either to retire the army to Walcheren and South Beveland, or to maintain a more advanced position till its ulterior destination can be decided on with reference to the then state of affairs.—Not only on this, but on every point connected with the general conduct of this important service, his Majesty is graciously pleased to confide to your lordship the fullest discretion to act as you



may deem most for the honour and advantage of his Majesty's service.—His Majesty feels assured, that his army and navy will vie with each other in giving effect to an enterprize, than which none has ever been confided of greater importance to their united efforts; and, as the surest means of successfully surmounting every obstacle, his Majesty trusts that the utmost spirit of concert and harmony will prevail throughout the whole of their operations between the respective services.

## No. 2.

## Draft to the Earl of Chatham.

*Downing-street, 1809.*

My Lord; I transmit for your lordship's information, a variety of papers and documents according to the annexed Schedule, which may be material to assist your lordship's judgment in carrying his Majesty's commands into execution.—They consist, 1st. of plans received at different times, and from different naval and military officers, for the reduction of Walcheren, and for an attack on the enemy's naval force and establishments in the Scheldt, as high as Antwerp.—2d. Of intelligence received of the numbers, state and position of the enemy's naval and military forces at the times specified, in the vicinity of the Scheldt.—3dly. Of communications received from the admiralty and the Commander in Chief, with reference to the proposed enterprize, in the former of which you will find specified the aid the navy will require from the army in occupying the island of South Beveland including Batz, so that the fleet may enter and navigate the Scheldt with security, which aid the navy considers as indispensable to enable them to carry the army up the river, to land it between Sandfleet and Lillo, and to bring it off when necessary.—Your lordship will observe, that the recent alterations made by the enemy in the defences of the island of Walcheren, including those of Flushing, are not described in any of the intelligence latterly received, with that precision which could be wished.—There is no reason to believe that hitherto the attention of the enemy has been directed either to the construction of any new works upon the river above Walcheren, or to the improvement of those which before existed. Antwerp itself, the forts of Lillo, Liefkenshoeik and Bathz, are described as being at this day much in the same state as when the British army was in Flanders in the year

1794, when they were seen by several officers of both services.—Upon a due consideration of the whole of this information, his Majesty's government have felt it their duty humbly to recommend to his Majesty, the adoption of the intended enterprize; and on the following grounds: 1st. In a confident hope that the difficulties of the attempt (the extent of which they do not disguise from themselves) may be overcome by the skill, perseverance and bravery of the respective services, and that the whole of the important objects to which the Expedition is directed may be successfully accomplished.—2. That if disappointed in this hope to its fullest extent, they see strong reason to expect that important services may still be performed, calculated in their consequences to add to the security of Great Britain, and to improve our means of prosecuting the war against France, whilst the defensive effort by which alone the enemy can succeed, either in circumscribing or defeating the attempt, must be made upon a scale which cannot fail to relieve our allies on the continent from much of the pressure to which they must otherwise be exposed in their present struggle for independence.—4th. That whilst the present Expedition combines a powerful diversion with the immediate pursuit of objects of the utmost value in themselves, it enables Great Britain to employ a larger proportion of its disposable force against the enemy than than it could attempt to do in any other mode, or in any other direction, regard being had to the extent of force already employed on foreign service, the present state of the continent, and the limits necessarily imposed upon the military exertions of this country at the present moment by the state of the exchanges, and the scarcity of bullion; and, Lastly, That as the naval and military branches of the armament will continue to act together throughout the operation, for their mutual support and protection, the safety of neither will be hazarded in a greater degree than the legitimate risks of war in the pursuit of objects of such magnitude will justify.—I have thought it right in transmitting to your lordship the accompanying papers, thus shortly to recapitulate the views with which the present service is undertaken.—I cannot close this letter without adverting to the principal point upon which the complete success of the operation may ultimately hinge.—I allude to the possibility of the ships afloat being

placed out of the reach of attack under the protection of the citadel of Antwerp, and that your lordship should not find that you can get possession of that work with the means you possess, and within the time which, consistently with the safety of your army, you can venture to remain before it.—I feel it due to your lordship that it should be distinctly understood, that this case of possible failure has been previously considered, and that whatever may be the degree of risk of its occurring, that it is one of those contingencies in contemplation of which his Majesty's confidential servants have nevertheless felt themselves called on to recommend that the enterprize should be undertaken.”—[The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 14.

*Martis, 6<sup>o</sup> die Martii, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

WILLIAM HUSKISSON, Esq. a Member of the House, attending in his place; was examined by the Committee.

Were you secretary to the treasury when the preparations for the Expedition to the Scheldt were made?—I was.

Was it any part of your duty in that situation to attend to the supply of the pecuniary demands made upon this country for his Majesty's forces employed on Expeditions on foreign service?—Every thing that related to the supply of Expeditions sent on foreign service, or of troops on foreign stations, with pecuniary means or provisions, come under my cognizance and direction, subject of course to the orders of the lords of the treasury.

In June last when the Expedition to the Scheldt was decided upon, what was the state of foreign exchanges, particularly of the exchange with Hamburgh?—I cannot answer that question with fractional accuracy; but I believe the foreign exchange, particularly the exchange upon Hamburgh, was against this country from 18 to 20 per cent.

Exclusive of the loss sustained upon bills to be drawn from abroad, was it practicable at that period to obtain considerable sums for such bills, even on the disadvantageous terms described in the former answer?—I certainly think, and the course

of the enquiries which were then made led me to believe, that it would not have been practicable to have raised any very large credits on the Continent.

Did you use your endeavours at that time to make remittances to Austria to a limited amount, and what difficulties did you experience in those transactions?—I certainly received directions to endeavour to procure the remittance to Austria of a sum of 150,000*l.* per month, on account of pecuniary aid to be advanced to that power, provided the means of making such remittance could be obtained. From the enquiries I had previously made, and the information I possessed, coupled with the then course of exchange, I conceived that such an operation would be extremely difficult, if not impracticable; however, being very desirous not to give any opinion merely upon my own view of the subject, I felt it my duty to consult with persons whom I conceived to be well versed in those subjects, and to possess the greatest means of executing the intentions of government, if it should be found practicable to execute them. The result of those enquiries was not to shew that it was altogether impracticable but that the operation would be attended with very great hazard and loss; that in the first place, it would tend to lower the exchange still further; that in the next place, from the want of any direct intercourse with the Continent, either of trade or even of communication by letter, it was impossible for any house of business in England to undertake to execute the operation with any degree of certainty as to its success; and even if the credits were raised on the Continent, by the means of the remittances being made from this country, still those credits could only be created in places either immediately in the occupation of the enemy, or so entirely under his controul as to give him the same power over such credits as would arise from the occupation itself, with a view to the interruption of any system of operations for transmitting this aid to Austria; the difficulty therefore was, first, to make the remittance to any secure place on the Continent; and secondly, if the remittance was even made, to render it available for the use of the Court of Vienna. The operation however was attempted, and I believe under the mask and guise of a commercial arrangement; more or less of success attended the attempt. The house by which it was un-

dertaken did not feel itself competent to engage to make such a remittance; but could only undertake to use its best endeavours for that purpose.

When the Expedition sailed to the Scheldt, what was the total amount of foreign coin applicable to military service abroad, at the disposal of government?—In point of fact there was none, strictly speaking, at our disposal at that moment; the treasury, foreseeing the probability of considerable demands being made of foreign coin for the purpose of supplying the military chests of our different armies on foreign stations, had taken measures so far back as the month of October 1808, to secure at the then price all the foreign silver coin, and all the silver bullion in the possession of the bank, except such as might be wanted for the purposes of the manufactures of this country; and it is only this amount that I could conceive could strictly be called at the disposal of government. The whole had been withdrawn from the bank prior to the month of June 1809; but the bank having made some small purchases of foreign silver coin between the interval of October and June, and having also some foreign gold coin in its possession, which was conceived to be peculiarly applicable to this service, the treasury purchased the sum that was conceived indispensibly necessary, in order to enable the Expedition to proceed at all; the sum purchased, and I believe it included all the dollars that could then be obtained from the bank, was in dollars 60,000*l.*, and in Dutch ducats 65,000*l.*; making altogether 125,000*l.*

What increase to this amount was the treasury enabled to gain between the month of July, when the Expedition sailed, and the middle of the month of October?—About the end of the month of August, upon a representation from the commissary general that some further supply became very urgent, all the dollars that were then to be procured in the bullion market here were purchased by the bank on account of government, amounting to 43,000*l.* sterling; the demands made were certainly for a larger sum, but there were no more dollars in the market, and none in the possession of the bank that could be spared. I cannot answer the question further, whether any additional supply was sent between that period and the middle of October, having no means of ascertaining that fact from my own knowledge.

Had the utmost exertions of government, aided by the bank, been employed for a length of time past to augment the stock of bullion and foreign coin applicable to foreign service?—I certainly conceived that every exertion had been made for this purpose; it was certainly obvious to me, that from the state of the exchange as well as from the situation of the continent, and of our intercourse with it, we should want every aid that could be procured; and I had therefore felt it my duty to adopt every arrangement for drawing supplies of silver bullion from the West Indies and South America; these arrangements had been successful so far as they enabled us, with the aid derived from the bullion in the possession of the bank, to keep up the military chests in Spain and in the Mediterranean; but at the period when the Expedition was prepared for the Scheldt, those chests, notwithstanding every exertion, were not so abundantly supplied as it would have been desirable they should have been if no difficulty had been experienced in procuring the means of making further remittances from this country both to Sicily and to the Peninsula; they were however in no want, though not with so large a stock in hand as is generally desirable in the course of active foreign service.

As the exchange stood in July last, and with the limited amount of specie then on hand, do you conceive, supposing a British army of 40,000 men had been disembarked in the Elbe and Weser, that the pecuniary means could have been procured to equip and enable such an army to take the field?—I certainly conceived that the pecuniary means could not have been procured in this country, and the difficulty of raising a credit in any place upon the continent which could have been made available to the use of a British army in the field appeared to me almost insurmountable; I have therefore no hesitation in stating as my opinion, that no army to that amount could have been sent to the Elbe or Weser, in order to take the field for a campaign accompanied with pecuniary means of placing itself in a state of equipment for that purpose. This is an opinion, which in discussions with the chancellor of the exchequer upon the means of providing a pecuniary supply for such a force, I strongly stated at that time, and in which as I understood upon the view he took of the subject, he appeared to me to concur.

What sum as means *en campagne* should you suppose it would require to render such a force capable of commencing operations upon its landing on the continent?—The sum that would be requisite for this purpose must depend very much upon the state of equipment in which such an army might be sent from this country, but in order to enable an army of 40,000 men to take the field so as to carry on the operations of a campaign, including the formation of magazines, and providing draft horses requisite for their movements and other unavoidable expences, I should think that not less than 500,000*l.* would have been requisite before they could have been said to be in a state to commence operations in the field.

At what sum should you estimate the monthly, ordinary and extraordinary expence of such a force during the campaign, assuming one-fifth of the army to be cavalry?—I believe the ordinary expence would be near 100,000*l.*, and the extraordinary expence, speaking upon a general view, I apprehend would not have been less than from 150,000*l.* to 200,000*l.* per month, varying according to the circumstances of more or less of activity in the operations of the army; but upon the whole, I should say that it would not have been prudent to have reckoned upon an expenditure of less than from 250,000*l.* to 300,000*l.* per month, always bearing in mind that whether the means of making such an expenditure were provided by bills of exchange, or by the purchase of bullion, the loss upon that exchange of from 18 to 20 per cent. is to be taken into this calculation.

Supposing on the arrival of the Expedition in the north of Germany, it had been deemed advisable to proceed immediately to levy, arm, and pay an army of native troops, what sum would it have required to create and support such a force, taking its number at 40,000 men?—It is very difficult to give any thing like a precise answer to that question; but I should conceive, that to levy, arm, and equip such a force, supposing it did not exist before as a military body, would certainly require at least 500,000*l.* before they could be considered as at all formed into a military corps. I do not conceive that their monthly expence afterwards could be less than two-thirds or three-fourths of the expence of a British force of the same amount.

VOL. XV.—*Appendix.*

Do you conceive that any extension of intercourse with the continent that could have resulted from the arrival of a British army in the Elbe, would have produced such an increased facility in point of exchange as would have justified the undertaking an Expedition to the north of Europe in contemplation of such a scale of expenditure as the two preceding questions refer to?—If the result of the Expedition had been to open a convenient and direct intercourse with the continent, and to put us in secure possession of a great market of exchange, such as Hamburgh, considerable facilities would certainly have been derived from those advantages; but I do not think, that in the state in which the exchanges were in the month of June, and considering that doubt might have existed as to the security of our occupation of Hamburgh or any such place, at least in the first movements, we should have derived a degree of facility for drawing bills upon this country at all adequate to the demands of such a force as is adverted to in the former questions. I must also observe, that in the opinion I entertained at the time the Expedition was prepared for the Scheldt, and the view I took of our pecuniary resources as far as relates to foreign coin, I conceive that we did not possess means adequate to the expence of such an Expedition, even up to the moment when it might be supposed to have obtained a secure footing upon the continent; and consequently with a reference to this pecuniary difficulty, that any such Expedition could not be undertaken without incurring great risk of finding itself without the means of providing for the subsistence and the unavoidable extraordinary expences of the army.

Can you state to the Committee the circumstances which enabled his Majesty's government to carry on the operation to the Scheldt with the limited pecuniary means which they at that time could command?—The sum provided for this Expedition, as I have already stated, was 125,000*l.*; it was conceived that if the proposed operations were brought to a close within a very limited period, this sum would be sufficient under the precautions which had been taken to prevent as much as possible, any pecuniary demands arising during the short period that it was supposed the whole of the army would remain on that service; those precautions consisted in paying for the whole of the staff or their allowances before they

(2 E)

embarked from England, in issuing the subsistence to the whole of the army up to the 24th of Aug. prior to their embarkation, in providing all the stores and provisions and equipments in this country; these circumstances, joined to the nature of the Expedition, in which the means of movement and supply were principally to be found in our naval resources, appeared to me to justify an expectation that the small sum which had been provided would be sufficient to guard the army against any risk of pecuniary distress in the course of their operations.

Supposing it had been deemed advisable to employ the force that went to the Scheldt either in the north of Spain, or in reinforcing the British army in Portugal, what do you conceive would have been the practicability for providing for such an increased expenditure in either of those quarters?—I am not prepared to say it would have been wholly practicable, but certainly the demands upon the military chest in the Peninsula, compared to the means of supplying that chest, notwithstanding every latitude had been given to the commissary in drawing bills of exchange, and every exertion made to procure specie, were such as to create the greatest apprehension that the chest would be entirely exhausted if the expenditure should be very considerably increased, and that view I thought it my duty strongly to state to his Majesty's government at that time.

Was it your opinion that it would have been imprudent to have risked such an increased expenditure in that quarter?—Any expenditure which might have exposed a great army to the risk of being without the means of carrying on its operations, would, I think, have been very imprudent, and I certainly did conceive there would have been that risk.

Do you apprehend that the same difficulty would have applied to employing the same force on the side of Italy?—I have no difficulty in answering that question; the military chest in the Mediterranean was in fact one on which the greatest pressure was felt at that moment, so great, I believe, that the commissary in one instance thought it prudent, with a view to reserve a sufficient sum for the unavoidable extraordinary expences, to issue the subsistence to the army weekly instead of monthly, as is the ordinary course.

What was the average price of Mexican

milled dollars or silver bullion per ounce or dollar from June 1808 to June 1809?—I cannot answer that question; the specie purchased of the bank, or rather agreed for in the month of Oct. 1808, was at the price of 5s. 4½d. per ounce of dollar silver, and 5s. 6d. per ounce of bar silver standard fineness, the bank being to be paid for such specie at the time it was called for, for the service of government; I believe the price in the market was considerably higher.

In the contemplation of the difficulty of procuring specie, were any instructions, and what, given to lord Chatham to enable him to supply that deficiency?—I do not know what instructions were given to lord Chatham; the commissary general was directed to procure what sums he could by negotiating bills of exchange upon the treasury.

Did any instructions, and what, pass through you to the commissary general relating to this service?—The instructions to the commissary general were to dispose of as many bills of exchange upon the treasury as he could at a fixed rate of exchange.

Was the fixed rate mentioned in those instructions from you to the commissary general?—I have not seen the instructions now for some months, and cannot perhaps speak so accurately as the instructions themselves would.

In consequence of those instructions, were any representations made consistently with your knowledge on the subject of those instructions from the commander in chief of the Expedition?—It consists with my knowledge that those instructions were communicated to the commander in chief before I left London; and I do recollect that after his arrival at Middleburg, some time in the course of the operation, a communication which I had an opportunity of seeing was made from the commander in chief, respecting certain directions given to the commissary general in those instructions.

In consequence of the communication made by the commander in chief respecting those instructions, what steps were taken?—The steps taken as far as I recollect, on the part of the treasury were, to state to the commissary general, with whom alone the treasury corresponded on this subject, the opinion of the board of treasury, that notwithstanding the observations which had been submitted to his Majesty's government by the com-

mander in chief, it was the direction of the treasury that he should continue to observe his original instructions.

Were any further steps taken or any further correspondence entered into with any other person arising out of the representation of the commander in chief?—I believe that whatever communication was made by the treasury to the commissary general, a copy of such communication was transmitted to the secretary of state for the war department, in order to its being communicated to the commander in chief; and I further believe it was in consequence of the little prospect that was stated to exist in the communications alluded to, of specie to any considerable amount being procured by the commissary general, that the effort was made for procuring the 43,000*l.* of dollars, which I have stated in a former part of my evidence to have been sent about the end of the month of August.

Was the king's advocate consulted, by the authority of his Majesty's treasury, with respect to the validity of the objections taken by the commander in chief, in his representations to the treasury, on the subject of instructions respecting specie?—I think he was consulted; but I rather think the reference was made by the secretary of state.

Do you know any think of directions to the commissaries in Zealand, respecting the purchase of stock and other necessaries for the army; as to the mode in which those articles were to be paid for?—None, but such as will appear in the instructions given to the commissary general.

Was the answer of his Majesty's advocate to the case submitted to his consideration, communicated to the commissary general by you?—I think it was not; and I do not believe that any communication of that opinion was ever officially made to the treasury.

RICHARD JONES, esq. Captain of his Majesty's ship the *Namur*, was called in;—Examined by the Committee.

Were you employed in the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—Yes, I was.

State to the Committee how you were employed?—I was employed in buoying out the Slough Passage.

Had not you instructions to give every assistance to the transports in getting through the Slough?—Yes, I had.

State as a professional man, whether every expedient that could be devised was

not devised by sir Richard Strachan to get those transports, and all the vessels, through the Slough?—As far as came within my knowledge, most certainly.

Did you submit any thing to him with that view which was not immediately complied with?—No, I did not.

Was there a good place to disembark cavalry and infantry on South Beveland?—Very good.

If you had been directed to disembark 20,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, how long would it have taken you to have done it?—It certainly could have been done within two days.

At what period were you employed to buoy the Slough Passage?—My order was dated the 4th of August.

Did you commence the operation on the 4th of Aug.?—I rather think I did; I am not positive whether it was not the 5th.

How long were you about it?—I had finished the 8th of August.

Before you commenced buoying off, were not a vast number of vessels got off the Rammekins?—There were several gun-boats off the Rammekins, and some of the bombs. I went down with a detachment of gun-boats the 3d of August myself.

The operation of getting the vessels through, commenced then before you were sent there specifically to superintend it?—Certainly.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

JAMES ARERDOUR, esq. a Captain in his Majesty's navy, called in;—Examined by the Committee.

You commanded a division of gun-boats in the Scheldt?—I did.

When did you go through the Slough Passage?—I went through the Slough Passage on the morning of the 2d of Aug.

When did you first anchor in the West Scheldt?—On the evening of the 2d.

Supposing it had been necessary for the whole flotilla and the bombs to have gone up to Bathz, at what time do you think they could have arrived there?—They might have all got through the Slough Passage into the West Scheldt, I think, very well in eight-and-forty hours.

• From the West Scheldt, supposing they had been directed to proceed to Bathz, how long would they have been in going?—They might have got to Bathz very well in one tide.

What became of the country vessels that conveyed sir John Hope's detachment to

South Beveland?—I really do not know; they did not come under my observation.

Do you know at what part of South Beveland sir John Hope's detachment was landed?—I do not.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Brigadier General SONTAG, called in;—  
Examined by the Committee.

What rank do you hold in his Majesty's service, and how long have you held a commission under his Majesty?—I am colonel in his Majesty's service, having served several times as a brigadier general in Sweden, Portugal, and Walcheren; and I have served his Majesty nearly 30 years.

Did you serve in the department of the quarter master general in the Low Countries in the year 1794, with the late sir Wm. Erskine and sir Ralph Abercromby?—I did in 1793 and 1794.

Have you frequently been at Antwerp and inspected the defences of that town?—I have been there about five or six times, and as a military man have seen the town two or three times.

When was the last time you saw the works of Antwerp?—In the year 1794 I was attached to general Dundas, the present Commander in Chief, on the evacuation.

State to the Committee your opinion of the defences of Antwerp, whether you consider it a strong place or not?—I consider the town not in a good state of defence, rather in a neglected state of defence.

What was the state of the citadel at the time you speak to?—Nearly in the same state as the town, although stronger by its works.

Were the fortifications in tolerable repair when you saw them, or in a neglected state?—Throughout in a neglected state.

What was the nature of the ditch when you inspected it?—In some parts there was a broad ditch and some water in it, at other parts I did not perceive water, it looked to me as being a sort of garden; in short, that part of the ditch was in a neglected state near the gate of Louvain.

Did you observe any covered way, and was that covered way preserved in a serviceable state?—Towards the citadel I believe there was a sort of a covered way, but not in a good state; towards the town there was no covered way, but a sort of glacis.

Were the works of the town revetted,

and were the revetments in good condition?—They were revetted, but I think not in a good condition.

Supposing the British army could have got possession of the town at Antwerp, do you apprehend that without reducing the citadel, it would have been possible for them to have destroyed the arsenal and the ships building upon the slips at Antwerp?—I think it would under protection of the houses of the town.

What is your opinion of the probability of the reduction of the town of Antwerp by bombardment?—I think that a town so populous and badly garrisoned might be reduced by bombardment.

Were you communicated with before the sailing of the Expedition, with respect to the nature of the intended operation against Antwerp, and what were your general impressions with respect to the probability of success?—I had some communication, and had sanguine hopes of success.

Were you consulted frequently by his Majesty's ministers with respect to the best means of reducing the island of Walcheren, and did you communicate plans to government with a view to that object?—I was, from the year 1796 until 1807, by different of his Majesty's ministers at different times.

When the reduction of Flushing lately took place, on an inspection of the works, did you find that any material alteration or improvement of them had been made by the enemy during the period he had been in possession?—I did not perceive any difference, except two ravelins, which had been placed before the gates.

Do you conceive that if the enemy had not taken measures for materially improving the defences of Flushing, it is probable they would have adopted any active system for improving the defences of Antwerp?—As matter of opinion, I might conclude that they perhaps did not, but I cannot say positively.

In what military situation were you employed, whilst you were in the island of Walcheren, and on the late Expedition?—I was attached as brigadier general to the army under the command of lieutenant general sir Eyre Coote, and appointed as commandant of the town of Middleburgh.

Had you any communication, when in that command, with persons who professed to have a knowledge of the state of the works of Antwerp at that time?—

By the nature of my situation as commandant of Middleburg, every foreigner coming into the island or going out of the same was obliged to appear before me; and I had communication with several persons relative to the state of Antwerp.

What was the general nature of the information you received from them, as to the then state of the defences of Antwerp?—That Antwerp was not in a good state of defence, and very badly garrisoned at first.

Did you understand that any additions had been made to the works, or that the works had been put into a good state of repair and defence?—No; I heard that some improvements had been made to the citadel.

Did you hear that a general repair had been given to the works of the town?—No, I did not.

Have you been in the fort of Lillo, and examined its defences?—I was there in the year 1794.

In what state of repair was the fort at that time, and what do you consider to be the nature and importance of that work?—The works appeared to me in a neglected state; they had been ceded from the Dutch to the emperor in the year 1785, and since that period I understood nothing had been done to them.

Did it appear to you a place, the reduction of which would be attended with much difficulty?—I do not apprehend that it could have resisted a vigorous attack for any length of time.

Did you inspect the fort of Liefkenshoeik?—I saw Liefkenshoeik nearly at the same time when I saw Lillo.

Is Liefkenshoeik a place as strong as Lillo, or a place of inferior defence?—Much smaller, and of inferior defence.

When you were last stationed on the continent at Hamburgh in his Majesty's service, had you any communications at that time with Antwerp; and did you understand that the works of the place had been put into a state of repair subsequent to its coming into the possession of the French?—I had no communication with Antwerp; but I had seen at that time several persons who had been there, and as far as I could understand, nothing material had been done to the town.

Was the last time you were at Antwerp in the year 1794?—Yes.

When were you at Hamburgh?—I was in Hamburgh or Altona from the year 1804 to about 1807, except the time I was with the Prussian army in Poland.

When you were at Antwerp, you state that it was in a bad state of defence, was it in a bad state of defence owing to the badness of the works, or owing to those works being in bad repair?—Chiefly being in bad repair.

How long would it have taken them to put those works into good repair?—Not being an engineer I cannot say the time that it would have taken.

If you are not an engineer, are you a good judge of the strength or weakness of the defences of Antwerp?—I humbly think, that judging of the strength of a place does not demand that knowledge and details which would be requisite to put it in a perfect state of defence.

Did you examine the state of the defences of Antwerp very accurately?—Not very accurately, but as a military man attached to a general, and the enemy probably making an attack upon it.

You have stated in one of your former answers, that in one part you did not see water in the ditch, but that it had the appearance of a garden, did you examine it so accurately as to ascertain whether there was water in it, or it was a garden?—I did not perceive water in it, and saw a garden, or the appearance of a garden; but I cannot say that I examined it more accurately.

Supposing it was a garden, and there were sluices which kept the water out of the ditch, would its being a garden prevent the garrison turning water into the ditch whenever they were so disposed?—Certainly not.

You have stated you had the most sanguine hopes of success of the late Expedition, was that hope founded upon the bad state of the defences of Antwerp, or upon your belief that a town so populous, and weakly garrisoned, might be taken by a bombardment?—The army composed of such a number of troops, the great fleet, the populous town of Antwerp badly garrisoned, as I had been informed, gave me the most sanguine hopes and confidence that the attempt might succeed.

Would not the probability of success in such a case depend altogether upon the weakness of the garrison, and the disposition of the inhabitants of the town, supposing the army had so far advanced as to bombard it?—I think it certainly would.

By what means do you think that success would have followed the undertaking, by siege, by assault, or by bombardment?—By a vigorous attack upon the weak points, and a bombardment.



What is the defect of that part of the fortification, which would have induced you to make the attack there?—If I recollect right, in the vicinity of that spot there are several windmills upon elevated ground, which would have favoured very much the establishing of batteries for the attack.

What do you mean by a vigorous attack, what mode of attack do you call vigorous?—To bring forward a great number of cannon, and establish a powerful battery to play upon some weak points.

Of what calibre should those cannon be?—I should think 18 and 24 pounders.

Is the Committee to understand that you proposed to batter a breach there?—Certainly.

Do you imagine that breaching batteries could have been erected without having first made regular approaches?—Not losing sight of the information which was impressed on my mind of the weakness of the garrison, I think that those batteries might have been established without making regular approaches.

What was the amount of the garrison you understood to be in the place?—I have been informed that at first they did not amount to above 1,500 or 2,000 men of all sorts of troops, and I was told very few regulars amongst them.

Do you know whether there were not a great number of workmen in the arsenal?—I was informed there had been, but that a great number of them had been detached to Gerinany, and that the remainder of the workmen, some gens d'armes, and some Custom-house officers, formed in the first instance the principal part of the garrison.

When you said, that you would have proposed to erect breaching batteries within a short distance of the place, did you say so on the supposition that the British troops would not have been molested in erecting those batteries?—Admitting that my information of the weak state of the garrison of the town was correct, I do not apprehend that the troops had much to fear being disturbed.

Do you mean to say that the 1,500 troops, with the workmen and gens d'armes, could not have molested troops employed in erecting batteries at a breaching distance?—On the supposition that the workmen were erecting batteries at a breaching distance, I beg to observe that they could not undertake it unless having a proper protection of military force.

You have said that Lillo could not resist a vigorous attack for any length of time, do you mean a vigorous attack by escalade, by assault, or by siege?—It would depend on the circumstances, which the commanding general would judge the best method of reducing it, perhaps all three.

Considering the state of the defences of Lillo when seen by you in 1794, do you think it could have been carried by assault?—Not immediately, except having such a weak garrison not able to defend it properly.

As Lillo is stated to be a regularly fortified place, would it not require, according to the extent of its works, a very large garrison, and under those circumstances could it be carried by escalade?—It is possible, though I cannot assert it to be positively done, as many towns of greater consequence than Lillo have been taken by escalade.

If the enemy were in the neighbourhood of Lillo, and the country inundated, which it was when the troops were in Walcheren, could it be approached by any other means than by the dykes and causeways?—I believe I have already answered that nearly, that it did not appear to my mind exactly whether all the spots about Lillo could be inundated, and consequently I could not give a positive answer to that question.

Could considerable batteries be erected upon those dykes?—I think sufficient to distress and make an impression upon such a small fortress, having only four or five bastions.

Were you at Lillo more than once or twice?—I believe I was there twice, I was there once certainly.

If Lillo was tolerably well garrisoned, would it not oblige an army to proceed by siege?—Certainly, by regular attack and siege.

You have stated that the town of Antwerp might be reduced by bombardment, in that answer do you include the citadel?—No.

Do you mean to state that the town of Antwerp was very populous in the year 1794?—I looked upon it as a very populous town.

Was it a commercial town?—It was.

Do not you consider it as more thinly inhabited than any other town in Flanders?—I do not.

You have stated in your evidence, that you have been consulted by different go-

vernments from the year 1796 up to the last year respecting the Expedition to the Scheldt, do you mean to say that you were called upon by ministers at different times, for your opinion, or did you tender an opinion at any time or at different times, of your own accord, to the government of the time respecting the propriety of that Expedition?—I have given in information relative to the island of Walcheren, and have had several times conversation with his Majesty's ministers relative to Walcheren.

In the last instance were you called upon by lord Castlereagh for an opinion, or did you send in any yourself, or desire any conference with his lordship upon the subject?—About two years ago I was required by lord Castlereagh in a meeting I had with his lordship; the conversation was relative to the island of Walcheren.

Was that the last conversation or conference you had with lord Castlereagh upon the subject?—I believe it was.

That was about two years ago?—I think it was.

Do you recollect that any requisitions were made upon the town of Middleburg for money during the time you had that government?—I do.

Was any seizure made of any money that was appropriated at Middleburg for the maintenance of the poor?—There was a claim made by the city of Flushing relative to some money which had been detained after the capture, but which was returned to the town of Flushing by orders of sir Eyre Coote. I do not know that any money belonging to the poor was taken or claimed by the town of Middleburg.

Was any taken from the town of Middleburg by the English?—None.

Do you recollect any representation made by the mayor and principal inhabitants of Middleburg on the subject of the seizure of any money?—I do not; claim was made for the reparations of the dykes and sea works, and a sum of money was given out of the public revenue for that purpose.

How far is the most distant part of the city of Antwerp from the citadel?—I cannot exactly answer that question; there was formerly, in the year 1794, an esplanade; only that separated the citadel from the town, which with some houses, I understand (which have been taken down) have been converted into a dock-yard.

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Do you think that if a distant part of the town of Antwerp had been attacked, the citadel could have afforded any protection to it?—No, the citadel being on the southern extremity.

Were not the scarp and counterscarp of Antwerp built with stone?—I believe they were.

Do you know to what depth the ditch could be filled with water?—I do not know.

Do you know whether part of the country contiguous to Antwerp could not be inundated?—I do not know it, but I do not suppose that the extent of the inundation could be large.

Could not the surplus population of Antwerp escape across the river unless we were in possession of both banks of the Scheldt?—Certainly.

Would it not have required a very considerable force to have invested Antwerp on both sides of the river?—To form a complete investment it would, but to blockade it in such a manner that no reinforcements could be brought in, I conceive the number required would be much smaller.

Do you know whether the country inclosed within the bend of the river by the Tête de Flandre might not be inundated?—I believe it might.

At the time you were at Antwerp in the year 1794, do you recollect sufficient of the place to be able to state to the Committee what may be the length of the river face between the citadel and the lower extremity of the town?—I think not, but I fancy it may be better than a mile, a mile and a half perhaps, but I cannot give a positive answer upon that.

Was the river face encompassed with any wall or fortification at the time you were there in 1794?—No, I do not recollect to have seen any; it was open, except the citadel.

Can you state to the Committee what you suppose to be the extent of the works of Antwerp towards the country, from one part of the river to the other?—I cannot, but being a large town it must be extensive.

Do you suppose it is three miles?—I dare say it is.

Are you able to inform the Committee whether at either of the gates of Louvain or Bergen-op-Zoom, there were any suburbs or buildings close to either bridges? I do not recollect; about the gate of Louvain, I think, there were a few straggling

houses, and principally windmills near the gate to Bergen-op-Zoom.

Supposing that our forces had been in possession of Lillo and Liefkenshoiek, do you imagine that there would have been any difficulty, had we at the same time had the command of the river, in destroying the enemy's arsenal and slips, which are supposed to be constructed upon the bank of the river between the citadel and the lower extremity of the town?—I think it would have greatly facilitated the reduction of the town, and the destruction of the arsenal and dock-yard.

You have stated that the citadel of Antwerp commanded the town, do you consider that an army, having obtained an entrance into the town, would be precluded by the citadel from taking a post under the protection of the houses, and commencing operations under that protection against the arsenal?—I think the town being taken, the destruction of the dock-yard and arsenals might have been accomplished by rockets and fire engines, and greatly facilitated by the protection of the houses of the town.

Do you consider that it would have been possible, supposing the British army in possession of Antwerp, to have erected batteries under the protection of the houses of the town against the ships of the line lying under the protection of the citadel, or to have attacked the ships in that position from batteries placed on the opposite side of the Scheldt?—As far as I recollect, I conceive the erecting batteries under the protection of the town to destroy the men of war lying under the protection of the citadel rather difficult, but having possession of the other side of the river that it might be executed.

Did you remain at Flushing till the evacuation?—I did.

Were the fortifications and dykes left completely destroyed?—I believe they were not.

Did not you act with that part of the army in Walcheren which was specially concerned in the siege of Flushing?—I was attached to that part of the army under the command of lieut.-general sir E. Coote, attended him on the landing, and was present at the investment of Flushing, but was removed in the beginning of August to Middleburg, to act as commandant.

Do you know the full extent to which the power of inundation might have been carried, as a means of defence to the gar-

rison of Flushing?—As I was informed from the principal inhabitants, and those connected with the hydraulic part of the island, they expressed with the greatest concern that if the cuts in the dykes had been made earlier and a storm came, the greatest part, and principally the town of Middleburg, would have been inundated.

If the utmost use had been made of the means of inundation, would it have been possible to carry on the siege by land against Flushing with any prospect of success?—I think it would from both flanks, principally the west flank, being considered as the weakest part of the defence of the town, being more elevated ground.

What delay do you conceive a complete inundation would have occasioned in the siege of Flushing?—I am not competent to give an answer to that.

Would it have occasioned considerable delay?—It certainly would.

Can you inform the Committee whether the works at Flushing towards the land were revetted, or merely plain earthen works?—I think only earthen works, tolerably well palisaded and friezed.

Can you inform the Committee the reason why, during the evacuation, those works were not completely destroyed?—I cannot.

Supposing the castle of Rammakins had been destroyed, and a cut had been made from one part of the sea to the other, so as completely to have insulated Flushing, do not you suppose under those circumstances Flushing might have been rendered almost impregnable?—I think it would have strengthened it very much; but such a cut could not have been made unless a dyke and dam had been erected to confine the water at a certain distance.

Were the sea defences at Flushing before the evacuation completely destroyed?—No; I understood that one of the reasons why it was not done was, that it would have exposed the whole island to inundation.

Did you witness the demolition of the basin of Flushing?—I did.

In your opinion is it rendered totally useless?—I cannot positively give an answer to that question; but it appeared to me that it would take a length of time to put it into a proper state of repair.

What time do you think would be necessary to put it into a proper state of repair?—It will depend greatly on the exertions of those who have it in their hands

to do it. [The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Lieut. Col. MOSHEIN, called in;—Examined by the Committee.

What rank do you hold in his Majesty's service?—Lieut.-colonel in the 60th regiment.

How long have you been in the British service?—This is the fifteenth year.

Were you employed on the late Expedition, and in what capacity did you serve?—I was employed on the late Expedition as assistant-adjutant-general.

When in the island of Walcheren, what military duty was assigned to you?—Before the surrender of Flushing I had the examination at head-quarters in Middleburgh of French prisoners and deserters that were brought in.

Were you afterwards appointed commandant of the fortress of Flushing after its reduction?—I was.

Did it fall within your knowledge that a part of the reinforcements that had been thrown into the garrison of Flushing, had been on their march to join the main French army on the Danube, and were brought back by waggons to Cadsand with a view of reinforcing that garrison?—It was frequently the deposition of several deserters and prisoners whom I had to examine, that they had been on their march to join the army in Austria, and were suddenly brought back to Cadsand.

Do you recollect to what towns they had arrived when the order for their return to Cadsand was received?—Some of them, if I recollect right, had reached Mechlin, and some were even as far as Louvain.

Do you recollect the names of the corps to which the information you have now given applies?—The 48th regiment of infantry, the 70th regiment, the 65th, the 8th demi-brigade, the 4th and 5th battalions.

During the period of your command in Flushing, had you communications with any persons with respect to the then state of the works at Antwerp, and what was the nature of the information you received from them?—I had frequent conversations with a man of great respectability in Flushing, who assured me, that I could depend upon it that nothing had been repaired or added to the fortifications of Antwerp since it was in the hands of the French; that all the expences of the French government had been towards

raising the dock-yard, and towards completing their basins.

Was there one person of a description particularly respectable, to the statement of whom you gave confidence?—I had every reason to place confidence and reliance on what he communicated to me.

How did that person express himself, with respect to the probability of the English army getting possession of Antwerp, if they had been enabled to advance rapidly up the Scheldt with a view to attack it?—He always lamented that we should have been so long detained in not coming up to Antwerp at once, he being sure that it must have fallen to the British force.

Had you any communication with other persons in the island, and particularly at Middleburg, on the same subject, and what was the nature of the reports you received from them?—I have not been often in Middleburg after my being placed as commandant in Flushing; but I remember very well to have had frequent conversations even in Middleburg, with one person I can remember very well, who always expressed the same regret, that we should not have come up to Antwerp sooner.

Are you acquainted with the country in the neighbourhood of Antwerp?—I am not.

Do you know the distance of Mechlin from Antwerp?—I do not know; I believe, judging from the map, it is about fifty-five English miles; but I am not positive.

Do you know the distance of Brussels from Antwerp?—I cannot say.

Is not Mechlin less than half way from Antwerp to Brussels?—I think so.

From whence had the French troops which you say had arrived at Mechlin, on their march towards the Danube, taken their departure?—They had been sent from Antwerp, from Brussels, from Ghent, and from other places in the country which I cannot exactly recollect.

Is not Mechlin further from the Danube than Brussels?—Mechlin is nearer the Danube than Brussels to my knowledge.

What are the principal towns that troops marching from Brussels to the Danube would pass through?—They can march from Brussels to Mechlin, from Mechlin to Louvain, and from Louvain to Charlemont.

Do you conceive Mechlin is in the route between Brussels and Charlemont?

—The direction over Louvain is taken from Brussels, and that is the high road: the next town, if I recollect right, is Charlemont; but I do not pretend to be positive.

Is it your opinion that the Expedition of the British army to the Scheldt created any impediment whatever to the military operations of Buonaparté in Austria?—As far as my opinion can be of any avail, I certainly am persuaded that it created a great diversion in the plans of Buonaparté at that time.

In what way did it create that diversion?—The very marching back of the French troops from Flanders, they being ordered at that time to the Danubé, proves that he wanted to collect all his forces there, and only the arrival of a British Expedition in the Scheldt occasioned their orders to return.

Do you recollect the date of the battle of Wagram?—I do not recollect the date.

Do you recollect the date of the armistice?—I do not.

Do you believe that the Expedition to the Scheldt prevented Buonaparté's having one single regiment less than he otherwise would have had in Austria at the time of the battle of Wagram, or the time of the armistice?—That depends entirely upon the date when the battle was fought; I cannot recollect the date, otherwise I would be more positive in my answer.

Do you recollect whether the battle of Wagram was known in England before the sailing of the Expedition?—I am not sure, but I believe that we heard of the battle of Wagram before we left this country. [The witness was directed to withdraw.]

ROBERT KEATE, Esq. was called in; Examined by the Committee.

What situation do you hold under the medical board?—Inspector of hospitals and assistant to the surgeon-general.

Was the general detail of the business conducted by you during the period that the surgeon-general was absent in his duty upon the coast?—Entirely so.

Upon what scale were the medical arrangements of the late Expedition originally formed?—On a larger scale than had been usual for Expeditions of a similar magnitude.

For what number of men and for what time?—First for 30,000 men, afterwards four regiments of cavalry were added; it was for 34,000 men for six months.

Did that arrangement include the 3,000 artillery employed on the Expedition, or had they a separate medical arrangement of their own?—The artillery were not mentioned in the orders to our department, and they had a separate medical establishment.

Exclusive of the general medical arrangements for the army, what regimental establishment do the corps going on foreign service carry with them?—Every regiment exceeding 500 men has one surgeon and two assistants, and the completest equipments of medicines and hospital bedding.

For what period of time is that supply of medicines calculated to last?—I believe for six months; it is not supplied by the surgeon-general's department at home.

Have you reason to suppose that any actual want was experienced by the army abroad of medicines of any description during the late Expedition?—I have the means of knowing there was no want whatever of any sort of medicines.

Do you include in that answer that there was no want of bark experienced by the army at any time during the late service?—I do.

Have you any information of a more detailed nature, that you could submit to the Committee, from which you draw that conclusion as to bark?—Yes, I have a memorandum stating the smallest quantity ever in store, and the quantities received from time to time.

[The witness delivered it in, and it was read.]

“ MEMORANDUM.

“ *Surgeon-General's Office, 12 Feb. 1810.*

“ The only returns received by the surgeon-general from the apothecary who had charge of the medicines at Walcheren, are, a general return of all medicines received and issued from the commencement of the Expedition to the 19th November 1809, and a separate statement of the receipts and issues of bark only.—By the first return (in my possession) the quantity originally supplied and received by the apothecary is stated to be,

	lbs.	lbs.
Of common bark .....	1,840	
Yellow ..... Do. ....	140	
		1,980

In this he does not include bark received in 13 spare regimental chests ..... 260

Do. in 36 detachment chests.....	144	
		404
Total original supply ...		2,384
Add bark, sent from Har- wich by the Diana Packet 13 Sept.; received 17th September .....		270
Total .....		2,654

"No return has been received which can shew the exact consumption up to any given date prior to the 19th November, 1809, but we know by a letter from the apothecary (Mr. Newton) to deputy-inspector Burrowes, dated Veere, 22d Sept. 1809, that he had then in store 500lbs. of bark, which he considered as a fortnight's consumption. By this Mr. Newton means in dépôt at Veere, from whence he issued medicines to other stations. There was another store at Middleburg, and one at Flushing; the quantities in each of which at that period we know not.

"We have another memorandum, that the apothecary had in store on the 28th Sept., 407lbs. of bark, although deputy-inspector Burrowes, in his letter to sir E. Coote of the 29th Sept., states that on that day there was in store 300lbs.—On the following day, the 30th Sept., we know that the apothecary received from the purveyor 400 lbs.—That in five days afterwards, the 5th Oct., he received also from the purveyor 1,060 lbs.—That in six days afterwards, on the 11th Oct. there arrived by the King George packet 800 lbs.—And in four days afterwards, by the Ann transport on the 15th Oct. (which had been ordered 18th September 1,000 lbs.—A want of bark was therefore wholly impossible, unless 407 lbs. could have been consumed in one day (the 29th), and we know that 440 lbs. is the largest quantity ever issued from the dépôt in any one week, and that the greatest average daily consumption was about 80 lbs.—We know also by the foregoing statement, that the lowest quantity to which the store was ever reduced, after providing for the current consumption, was 300 lbs., with the means of increase existing to any amount.—That there was in effect no want may be testified by every medical officer who was at Walcheren.—The total consumption of bark to the 19th Nov. is stated in the above-named return to have amounted to 3,132 lbs.—The total original supply was 2,654 lbs.—The consumption therefore

exceeded the original supply by only 478 lbs. ample means of meeting which were received from England in the early part of October, as above stated.—As the apothecary's return here alluded to does not account for the consumption of the 1,460 lbs. of bark purchased at Middleburg, I have not noticed that quantity as part of the means; but allowing the whole to have been consumed, it leaves the same balance of 478 lbs. to be provided for before the 19th November.—The delay in the arrival of the 1,000 lbs. of bark, which were ordered on the 18th Sept., a delay certainly not attributable to the medical department (which has no more controul over the transport service than that department has over the winds and tides) was sufficient to justify purchase as a precautionary step; but it does not appear that any application was made to another ample source of supply without purchase, namely, to the naval department, for a temporary loan until supplies might arrive from England, mutual assistance between the medical departments of the army and navy being usual on every foreign service.—It is possible that if the surgeon-general had known the destination of the Expedition, he might have added to the quantity of bark: but after its arrival at Walcheren, the foregoing statements evince that there were no grounds for his deviating from the usual orders, viz. to send supplies only upon requisition, especially after the severe censure of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry in their 5th Report, upon his sending any supplies whatever unasked for. It became the duty of the inspector of hospitals with the Expedition to watch the consumption, and to apply for every thing necessary to replenish the stores; the surgeon-general depended on him to do this, and his confidence was well placed; for at a very early period, the 11th Sept., before one-fourth part of the original supply was consumed, Mr. Webbe did apply for 1,000 lbs. of bark. The surgeon general received this requisition on the 18th Sept., and on the very same day gave orders to the apothecary-general to supply it, and to the storekeeper-general to ship it, although his assistant had on the 5th Sept. anticipated the supply in part by sending 270 lbs. from Harwich, which reached Walcheren on the 17th Sept.; and, as I have before stated, neither the surgeon-general nor Mr. Webbe are responsible for the non-arrival of the

1,000lbs. ordered on the 18th Sept., until the 15th October. From this delay, however, no distress did occur.—In the separate Schedule of the receipts and issues of bark, the apothecary has given credit for a quantity rather below that with which he debits himself in the former return alluded to.—Exclusive of the bark contained in regimental and other chests, the quantity stated by the apothecary in this separate return as having been originally received, is

	lbs.
Aug. 1, By various transports ...	1,770
Sept. 17, By Diana packet .....	270
Oct. 11, By King George do. ...	800
15, By Ann transport .....	1,000
17, By packet .....	500
18, By Adriatic transport ...	500
26, By Redbreast do. ....	500
27, By Rebecca do.....	500
Total .....	5,840

“The above is exclusive of the 1,460lbs. purchased, and of 500lbs. shipped on the Tucker transport, which arrived, but was not landed at Walcheren.—As to other medicines, I have documents to shew that there never was, and never could be any want. I can shew, that during the whole of the Expedition, the original supply was, in two articles only, expended; that a fresh supply of those two arrived at Walcheren on the 15th October, and that some of the original packages of these two had not been opened so late as the 3d of November.—As to bedding, the original supply was equal to the ordinary provision for 34,000 men, with an addition of 310 sets, that is, 3,710 sets, besides the regimental hospital and quarter-master general’s bedding. To which were added on the 6th September, in anticipation of future probable wants, adverted to by Mr. Webb in a letter of the 27th August, received on the 2d September, 1,000 sets; and on the 6th October, 1,000 sets more, and 400 placed on board three King’s ships.—These sets (exclusive of the last mentioned 400) comprised 15,430 sheets and 14,130 rugs and blankets; besides which, a very large supply was reported by the storekeeper general to be at the disposal of the quarter-master general’s department in Walcheren on the 12th October. In order to give a perfect change of bedding, the surgeon general recommended 12,000 sets to be sent out.—As to the want of medical

officers, it was felt in that class only which did not exist, namely, in hospital mates; and if a sufficiency of medical men could have been found to take the appointments, it did not rest with the surgeon general to appoint them.—R. KEATE.—Insp. of Hosp. and Ass. Surg. Gen.’s Department.”

In sir Eyre Coote’s letter of the 29th of September, it is stated on the authority of the deputy inspector Burrows, that only 300lbs. of bark were then in store; is it to be understood that this was the aggregate quantity of bark to be found in the several depôts and hospitals established in the island of Walcheren?—No, the 300lbs. was in store at Veer, which was the chief depôt, and was exclusive of what had been delivered out for the current consumption of the other depôts and hospitals for the day or for the week, in which ever way the issues were delivered, according to the consumption.

How many depôts of medicines had been formed in that island, and at what stations were they formed?—I only know of two depôts besides the one at Veer; which were at Middleburg and Flushing.

Exclusive of the 300lbs. of bark in the depôt at Veer, how much was there in the other depôts which are now stated to have been established at Flushing and Middleburg?—I have not yet been able to ascertain exactly how much was in each of those, but 100lbs. had been issued from the depôt at Veer to the depôt at Middleburg on the preceding day, the 28th.

Is the Committee to understand that the quantity of bark in the respective depôts was exclusive of the bark at that time issued to the regiments and to the hospitals?—Certainly.

Were there any sources from whence bark could have been procured in cases of emergency?—Yes, by purchase or by application; the usual place would have been to have applied to the naval department for a loan, in case any had been wanted before the arrivals from England.

Is it not usual for the navy to supply medicines to the army on pressing emergency, and has not the army reciprocally afforded the same assistance to the navy under similar circumstances?—Always on all foreign services; there are very few returns which come to the surgeon-general that do not give account of such loans or such assistance.

Was there any quantity of bark on board the King’s ships which accompanied

the Expedition, and how much?—I have not been able to ascertain the quantities on board, except generally that there was a very considerable quantity on board each of the ships of war.

What facility of purchase have you reason to suppose existed in the island of Walcheren at the period in question?—I know that there was a great deal to be purchased, because they did purchase a quantity on the 30th of September, and also from the 4th to the 18th of October.

Were there any official complaints from the physicians or surgeons of the army to the head of the medical staff at Walcheren, and through him to the surgeon general, respecting a scarcity of bark, or any other medicine?—None whatever.

Have you reason to suppose that at any period the army experienced any want of what are called medical comforts, and particular port wine and porter?—I believe that the sick never wanted any, no complaints were ever made to the surgeon general of any want of the kind.

Upon what scale did the medical board at home proceed in framing their arrangements for supplying the hospitals with bedding?—Every regiment, in the first instance, was supposed to go out completely equipped with its usual supply of bedding, and then the ordinary provision for 34,000 men was sent out, with the addition of 310 sets, I think, above the usual complement; and on the 1st of September 1,000 additional sets were ordered out, and 1,000 more on the 6th of Oct.

Was the provision you have now stated to have been made for the bedding of the army exclusive of a large provision of blankets that were in the quarter-master general's store?—I understood from the storekeeper general that there were 30,000 blankets in the quarter-master general's department that were available for any purposes, and there was besides a very large supply that was made use of belonging to the French hospital department.

Was a considerable quantity of extra sheets sent out in order that the blankets in the quarter-master general's store might be rendered more available for the purposes of the hospital?—An extra sheet was sent out with every set of bedding that went from this country, which amounted to upwards of 4,000.

Have you reason to suppose that the army suffered any inconvenience on the subject of bedding, after a proper organi-

zation of the hospitals took place?—I never heard of any official complaints from the medical department there; and I know that they had a larger quantity of bedding than of sick at any time.

Is the Committee to understand, that an hospital arrangement in England was made for the reception of 5,400 sick or wounded, as early as the beginning of Aug.?—Such an arrangement was made; I think it was before the end of July that the order was given to the medical department.

Was this arrangement notified both to the commanding officer abroad, and also to the medical officers abroad?—It was notified by the surgeon general's department only to the chief of the medical staff abroad.

Was the transmission of the sick from Walcheren a matter of official arrangement by the quarter-master general's department abroad and the officers at home?—It was, I believe, an arrangement entirely in the quarter-master general's department. Returns of the sick embarked were always sent home by the inspector of hospitals in Walcheren, and a statement of the port to which they were to be sent.

Was the transmission home of sick from Walcheren ever delayed by the want of hospital accommodation at home?—I never heard of any such thing; I should conceive it impossible.

It appears upon the minutes of examination, that at one period, only 50lbs. of bark was found in store at Walcheren, is there not some mistake in that statement?—I have understood from the apothecary, who is stated to have given that account, that the deputy inspector who sent it to the surgeon general, must have mistaken a cypher; because on the same day, there is a report to the surgeon general, of 500lbs. being in store; that was on the 23d of September; and 407lbs. were in store on the 28th.

Has not the conduct of the surgeon general been censured heretofore, for sending medical stores to foreign stations without express requisitions being made to him for that purpose?—Yes, particularly in the instance of stores sent to Gibraltar in the year 1794, before the sickness of that garrison; and in various instances by the Commissioners of Military Enquiry, in their 5th Report.

Did the surgeon general take upon himself the responsibility of sending any medical stores to Walcheren, particularly



bark and bedding?—The surgeon general sent bedding on the first of September before he received a requisition for it, and his assistant sent a division of medicines on the 5th of September from Harwich, without requisition, when the surgeon general was out of town; I took that responsibility upon myself.

Was the surgeon general resident in London during the whole period of the Walcheren Expedition?—No, he was necessarily absent a great part of the time making arrangements for the sick that arrived from Walcheren, at the different points of the coast.

Are you competent to say that there was no neglect in the management of the department of surgeon general, as applicable to the service of Walcheren?—I am not conscious of any neglect, and I believe the more it is examined the more that will appear.

Do you recollect lord Castlereagh, on the 9th of September, desiring that the surgeon general would call upon his lordship the next day, with a view of ascertaining whether all the necessary arrangements were in progress for the relief of the sickness in Walcheren?—I do; the surgeon general was then out of town, at Deal I think; I sent word to Deal that his lordship had sent for me on the Monday; the 11th, I called at his lordship's office, and saw the under secretary of state, Mr. Robinson.

What official report, as assistant to the surgeon general, did you feel yourself enabled to make on the Monday when you called on the under secretary of state, Mr. Robinson?—That from every information I had received from Walcheren, before and during Mr. Keate's absence, I had no reason to suppose there was any sort of want; that every thing was supplied that had been asked for, or that could be deemed necessary.

Did not you feel yourself enabled to assure Mr. Robinson that every possible arrangement had been made, and was in progress of execution at home, with a view to the accommodation of the sick?—Certainly, every thing that depended upon the surgeon general's department.

Had you heard, either officially or otherwise, of any particular complaint of distress among the sick of general Picton's brigade at any time?—I do not recollect the name of general Picton's brigade; there were two brigades which came home; one was general Houston's

and there was another, the name of which I do not recollect, which came home in a very sickly state to the eastern district, and an order was sent to the medical board for an immediate inspection of them.

What were the particular circumstances attending the sick of those brigades different from others you may have received, or know to have been received from Walcheren?—I do not know that there was any thing particular in the nature of the sickness; I do not know any particular circumstances; the physician general went down to inspect them.

Do you know that during the time the troops were in the island of Walcheren, any particular representations were made by general Picton of the distress of the sick in his brigade?—I never heard of any particular representation till this moment; it was not likely any representation of the general should come to the surgeon general's department.

Do you know that any of the sick were sent home very much crowded in transports more crowded than men in health would have been in the same ships?—They came home in some of the early transmissions of sick, I understood, more crowded than they ought to have been as sick men, I do not know whether more than they would have been if in health.

Can you state the number of sick compared with the tonnage in those transports?—No, I am not aware of it.

Do you know that some of those transports returned without any hospital mates, or any medical attendants at all?—Yes, and a particular representation was made to the commander in chief through the secretary at war.

By whom?—By the surgeon general. Is a copy of that representation to be found?—At the medical board office, and of course at the Commander in Chief's office.

Are you enabled to inform the Committee of the nature of the Walcheren fever, which destroyed so many of our people?—Not particularly, I do not profess any particular knowledge of diseases; being a surgeon, I do not profess a particular knowledge of fevers.

Did not you understand it was a contagious fever; something of the nature of the gaol distemper?—I believe certainly not, I believe an epidemic, but not a contagious fever; there are very few instances of the typhus or contagious fever.

Mr. Burrows, one of the inspectors of hospitals, has stated that the common Walcheren fever had degenerated into a contagious fever, by which means we lost so many men; do you know of any particular preparation being sent out to the troops for the purpose of remedying or destroying contagion?—There are always medicines sent out with the usual supplies of stores that are supposed to be adapted to that purpose, such as acids and other antiseptics.

Do you know whether or not those were ever used or resorted to?—Parts of the different acids were used, as they would as tonics after a remittent fever.

Are you aware of a difference of opinion that prevailed at the time of the sailing of the Expedition between lord Castlereagh and the medical board, upon the subject of the number of hospital ships it was necessary to send to accompany the Expedition?—An application was made for three hospital ships, and an answer came from the war office to say that lord Castlereagh thought it would occasion too great a delay to fit out three hospital ships, as one was already fitted up, and two or three transports were to go as convalescent ships.

Was not that request from the medical board repeated two or three separate times?—I believe a second time the answer was applied for, I am not aware of the repetition of the application, the answer was applied for before it was received I think.

Are you able to state any opinion, as to whether more than two hospital ships were necessary to accompany the Expedition?—No, I do not feel myself able to give any opinion upon that.

Do you recollect that the application for the hospital ships was made on the 12th of July, three or four days before the Portsmouth division was expected to be ready to sail?—I do not recollect the day exactly, but I know it was a very short time before the Expedition was expected to sail.

Is it the practice of the service, that armies which expect to have hospital establishments on shore, should be attended by an extensive establishment of hospital ships?—There are seldom above one or two; two with an Expedition of any size in general. I think that only one went with the Expedition to South America.

Supposing the three hospital ships ap-  
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plied for had been fitted out, what number of sick, taking the transports to be of 4 or 500 tons, would they have been capable of receiving on an hospital establishment?—I should conceive not above 200 men.

Do you know that in complete hospital ships, when they are to be used as such, the allowance of tonnage is about ten ton a man?—It would be desirable to have that tonnage allowed to each sick man. [The witness was directed to withdraw.]

THOMAS KEATE, Esq. called in.—Again examined by the Committee.

Are you desirous of correcting a part of your evidence?—Believing that I misconceived some questions put to me by one or two honourable members of this Committee, and that my answers were not so pertinent and so expressed as I could wish them to have been, and which I very much regret, I addressed this letter to the chairman, who was pleased to suggest to me, the propriety of my tendering it to this Committee; and I humbly hope this Committee will allow me to present it. [The Witness delivered in the letter, which was read.]

*Albany, March 6th, 1810.*

“Sir; having reason to fear that the evidence, which I was suddenly called to deliver to the Committee of Inquiry of the House of Commons, respecting the Walcheren Expedition, was not sufficiently explicit and comprehensive upon some of the points on which I was examined, I beg permission through you to state the following facts, as supplementary and as explanatory of my former evidence, and as being expedient to enable the Committee to form just opinions concerning the several matters to which they relate.—1st. In regard to the supposed deficiency of bark, I beg leave to state, that I had been restricted by a positive war-office order, from sending out any supplies to troops on foreign stations, except upon requisitions for such supplies being received by me from the head of the medical department on those stations. The army, besides, which was sent to Zealand, and whose numbers had been officially notified to the medical board as amounting to 30,000 men, and four regiments of cavalry, had been provided with bark sufficient for the usual consumption of 34,000 men during six months; and this quantity would have  
(2 G)

sufficed for five weeks consumption if even the half of the army had fallen sick on the day of landing, an event out of all human probability. Such a provision therefore precluded all apprehension, that bark would be wanting so soon after the debarkation of the troops in Walcheren was known here, as to make it necessary for me to deviate from the rules of the service, particularly as the inspector of hospitals with that army had received precise instructions to send to me frequent returns of the quantities of medicines consumed, and of the supplies wanted, and as the small distance of that island also rendered the speedy compliance with his requisitions, a matter of apparent certainty. The first requisition for bark that was made to me, by the head of the medical department in Walcheren, extended only to 1,000lbs. and this requisition was not accompanied by any account of the expenditure of that medicine; upon the very day of my receiving that requisition, viz. on the 18th September, I saw the acting apothecary general, and gave into his hands an order signed by myself for that quantity of bark, and at the same time urged him verbally to provide it with all the promptitude he could; and I likewise wrote to the storekeeper general on that day, desiring that he would forward its shipment and conveyance by "the first possible opportunity." This will, I trust, appear to the honourable Committee to be all that it was incumbent on me to do at that time, considering too, that Mr. Webbe's letter did not intimate any very urgent need of bark; and that his subsequent letters, and also the first letters of his successors in the department, were altogether silent upon the subject: and whatsoever delays in the expediting of that bark might have arisen afterwards, they should be laid to the charge of the department in which they occurred, and not of mine, which had absolutely no further duty or concern therein than to make the formal requisition to the apothecary general. Being anxious however that no want of that medicine should be experienced, I made several enquiries respecting the progress of the parcel I had so ordered to the place of its destination, and upon finding in the beginning of October that it was still detained here, and that the sickness was increasing among the troops in Walcheren, I lost no time in procuring several other parcels of bark

amounting to 1,800 lbs. to be sent chiefly from London by coaches to Harwich and Deal, and forwarded by the packet to Flushing, without waiting for any more requisitions, subsequently to which 1,500lbs. more of bark were sent off, and arrived there in the course of that month. I am enabled to assert that in fact no want of bark, or of any other medicine, ever existed for a single instant among our army in Walcheren; in proof of which I may state that one division, B. by the vessel *Three Sisters*, which was shipped in July and arrived there on the 1st of August, was not opened till the 3d of November, and another which arrived in the *Diana* packet on the 17th September had not been inspected till the 23d of October; and although the services of the army and navy are in the constant habit of accommodating each other, it appears to have never been found necessary to make any application to the medical officers of the navy for bark. It appears also that the quantity sent from this country to Walcheren, including the original supplies, amounted to 6,954 lbs. and that the consumption thereof had, up to the 19th November, amounted only to 1,132 lbs. leaving 3,822 lbs. unexpended; and this, exclusive of 1,400 lbs. that had been purchased, and of which I received no account.—2dly. In regard to the alledged deficiency of medical officers, I have to state that the duty and the power of providing physicians and hospital-mates, the two classes most wanted, did not belong to me, but to the physician-general and inspector-general; and that when I had made, as I did, the proper formal requisitions to them, I had exercised in respect to those classes my authority to its fullest extent. In respect to staff-surgeons, the care of providing them certainly belonged to me; and that they were duly provided and dispatched as they came from their respective districts may be proved by documents in my office. I however did more, for, knowing the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of hospital-mates, I so early as the month of July forwarded to the war-office, and strongly recommended for adoption, a plan addressed to me by an army physician, for the creation of a new class of medical assistants to perform a part of the duties of hospital-mates in compounding medicines, under the denomination of dispensers, which plan was accordingly adopted; and I afterwards

solicited and obtained permission to procure the temporary aid of the physicians and surgeons of the great London hospitals, and also of able country practitioners, in treating the numerous sick who were sent back from Walcheren, by which the most essential benefit was obtained, and the nation relieved from any additional burthen of permanent medical appointments in the army.—3dly. On the head of bedding and blankets, I have to state, that no want of these articles was ever reported to me till very late in the campaign; but that I procured 2,000 sets of bedding to be sent to Walcheren without any requisition to my department, viz. 1,000 sets on the 6th September, and 1,000 sets on the 6th October, and I had given directions for sending a much greater number, when the store-keeper-general reported to me that “an immense quantity existed there in the quartermaster-general’s department.”—4thly. Concerning the unprovided manner in which the sick were sent home in transports, it is necessary to state that I frequently remonstrated with the head of the medical department in Walcheren, and also made some representations to the Commander in Chief at home on that subject, and particularly on embarking sick on board of transports without any medical officer on board, or even orderlies to attend them, and that the Commander in Chief was thereupon pleased to issue positive orders on this head.—5thly. As to the mode in which the sick were brought on shore upon their return to England, I must observe that this did not rest with the medical department, but with the transport board.—6thly. In regard to my not proceeding to Walcheren, I beg to remind the honourable Committee that my going thither was altogether incompatible with the execution of the urgent duties at home specially assigned to me by the Commander in Chief and secretary at war, as expressed in Mr. Moore’s letter of the 15th August, but that I nevertheless declared my readiness to go to that island if my superiors thought that my services there would be more useful than at home.—More than 40 years have elapsed since I entered his Majesty’s service, and more than 16 since I became a member of the army medical board, during which my shares of its duties have been most arduous and laborious, and though disagreements have sometimes arisen within the latter part of the time

without any fault of mine, as may be proved by official documents in my possession, I most confidently aver that I have never allowed them in any instance to influence my official conduct to the detriment of his Majesty’s or the public service, even in the slightest degree; and if a contrary opinion should unfortunately exist in the minds of any members of the Committee, or if the facts I have now had the honour to state should not remove all unfavourable impressions respecting me, I beg leave humbly to express my most anxious wish for a more particular and distinct enquiry concerning every part of my conduct which may be supposed blameable, or even questionable; though from a defect of hearing and impaired health, as well as from my having been necessarily much absent from London in making arrangements for receiving the sick constantly pouring in from Walcheren, I am induced to think that the desired information might have been more conveniently obtained by examining my assistant, Mr. Robert Keate, who has been most intimately acquainted with every transaction in my office, and who, without any such defect, would probably have recollected more accurately and circumstantially than I could do, the dates and details of any transactions upon which it might have been deemed necessary to question him. I am myself however conscious of nothing which ought in justice to deprive me of the credit and remuneration due to a long, faithful, and meritorious discharge of the numerous duties attached to the several appointments with which his Majesty was graciously pleased to honour me. I have, &c. T. KEATE.”  
*To the Chairman of the Committee of the Enquiry on the Walcheren Expedition.*

As you were absent a considerable time during the Walcheren Expedition upon the coast, in consequence of an Order from the Commander in Chief, can you produce that Order?—I have it here.

[The witness delivered in the Order, and it was read.]

Immediate.

358\*.

*War Office, 15th Aug. 1809.*

“Gentlemen; The secretary at war in communicating the sentiments of the Commander in Chief, and his own opinion, upon the subject of your letter of the 10th instant, directs me to express his deep regret at the discordance which exists among the principal members of the

army medical board, especially at a time when the exigencies of the service require the most cordial co-operation.  
12,884.

"As it would appear, however, that notwithstanding the caution which was communicated on this head in my letter of the 5th of this month, the inspector general of army hospitals still declines to act with his colleagues as a board, or to give his opinion conjointly upon the very important point now under consideration; Lord Granville Leveson Gower with the concurrence of the Commander in Chief, approves of the arrangements for the care of the sick and wounded expected from the army under the command of the earl of Chatham, being carried on by the surgeon general, I am, &c.

*Principal Officers of the Army Medical Department.* F. MOORE."

Were you satisfied with the attention of Mr. Webb, the inspector of hospitals, during the Walcheren Expedition?—Most perfectly during the time of his having the direction of the department.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

JOHN WEBB, esq. Deputy Inspector of Hospitals, called in;—Examined by the Committee.

Were you at the head of the medical department in the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—I was.

During what time did you continue in the superintendence of the medical department?—From the 8th of July to the 13th of September.

During that period did the army sustain any want of medicines of any description, and particularly of bark?—Not at any time.

Did it sustain any want of what are called medical comforts, and particularly port wine and porter?—It did not.

Did the sick in the hospitals sustain any inconvenience from the want of bedding after the hospitals were settled, and completely established?—That question it is difficult for me to answer, because we had at first established hospitals as soon as the British army landed in Walcheren, afterwards we established hospitals a second time, when there was a great influx of sick from South Beveland.

Were you informed of the arrangement that had been made of hospitals at home on the coast for the reception of the sick that might be sent home?—I was.

Was the amount of sick greater than

you had reason to expect from the nature of the climate?—I certainly should have given it as my opinion, had I known where the army was going to, and what service it was to perform, that the sickness would be very great, but not so great; nor should I have conceived the loss would be so great as it has proved to be.

From the enquiries you have made as to the effect of the climate upon the natives of those islands, and the sickness that the British troops have been exposed to when on service before on those islands, are you of opinion that the mortality on the late service was much greater than in either of the cases stated?—The opinion that I have already given on the former question is grounded on the information I had obtained of the effect of the climate on the British army when employed there in the year 1747; that season was particularly unfavourable, and the mortality is stated by sir John Pringle to have been nearly as great among the inhabitants as it was among the British troops. The last season was a favourable one; and from the information I obtained in the island soon after I arrived there, I found that during seasons of that description the mortality never was considerable; from the information I received I hoped that the sickness would not have been so violent, nor the loss so great as it proved.

Have you reason to conceive that an army operating in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, would have been exposed to extraordinary sickness?—It would depend upon the description of the ground on which it would be necessary to encamp that army, whether it was at such a distance from any low and swampy ground as might affect the troops encamped in that situation. I have not such correct knowledge of Antwerp and its vicinity as to give a more direct answer to the question.

Have you understood, that with the exception of the banks of the river, the vicinity of Antwerp is in general a sandy and dry country?—I know that the vicinity of Antwerp, particularly to the south-east, is very fertile, but I cannot say from my own knowledge that it is a sandy country.

Is it your opinion that any precautions could have been adopted to prevent the disease, before it shewed itself in the troops?—I do not think that any precautions could have been adopted to have prevented the disease; I think it might in a certain degree have been palliated, but that not in a great degree.

By what system could it have been palliated?—In the first respect, with regard to clothing, I think warm flannel waistcoats would have had a good effect in preventing any suppression of perspiration, when the men were exposed to duty during the night; several other precautions with respect to preventing the men from exposing themselves unnecessarily to the effects of the climate, such as fishing in the dykes, and lying down on the marshy ground, which the men are apt to do, if not prevented; also, they were directed to take stimulating substances in the morning, and to boil the water, that some of the pernicious effects of it might be prevented thereby.

Did not the gaol or hospital fever make its appearance in the hospitals at Walcheren?—Wherever a considerable number of sick are accumulated together a febrile disease is apt to degenerate into what is usually called in England a typhus or gaol fever, this was the case in Walcheren; I do not say it was generally the case, but in many instances it was: but what I state merely relates as far as the 13th of September.

Are you acquainted with the fact, that Parliament, about five years ago, granted a pecuniary remuneration to a gentleman for the discovery of the means of preventing contagion?—I am not certain that I am aware of the fact referred to, but if it respects doctor Carmichael Smith, I can answer in the affirmative.

Were those means resorted to in the hospitals at Walcheren?—Fumigation was ordered in Walcheren, not to destroy infection, but to prevent it.

Were the orders for fumigation complied with and generally pursued?—To the best of my knowledge they were.

On whom did the compliance with those orders depend?—Every medical officer in charge of a division of an hospital is answerable that the regulations which are ordered by Government, are carried into effect.

Were not the men extremely crowded in the different regimental hospitals at Walcheren after the 20th of August, when the great sickness prevailed?—They were after the 27th of August, when an order was suddenly received to prepare for the reception of the sick of that part of the army which was in Beveland; but every exertion was made on the part of the military officers to remove that inconvenience as soon as possible.

Did not you understand that the naval men who remained on board the ships were in general extremely healthy?—I did.

Was it not possible to have removed the sick or the convalescents on board of the transports, and to have had the transports fitted up as hospital ships for their reception?—It certainly was not, because the principal cause of the hospitals being crowded in Walcheren, was because there were not transports to bring the sick home of those regiments that were ordered to England.

Did you never hear that the encampment of troops upon the sand hills was the means of keeping them extremely healthy?—I did hear an assertion of that kind, and I paid very strict attention to it, to endeavour to ascertain whether it was correct or not, and I am convinced it was not correct.

In a former part of your evidence, you stated to the Committee, when asked respecting the healthiness of the country in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, that it would greatly depend on the sort of ground on which the troops were encamped, from that I was led to understand that if they were encamped on a sandy situation, they would be more healthy than on a swampy ground; do not you therefore conceive that if the troops had been encamped upon the sea shore in a high sandy situation, they would have been likely to have been kept in good health?—That troops should be healthy in camp, it is not only necessary that the ground should be dry, but that they should be at such a distance from any marsh, that the effluvia from that marsh shall not affect the troops; it is on this ground I say I am convinced that the assertion which I have already alluded to was not correct, because, although the troops might be more healthy in this than in other situations in the island, as they would sometimes have the pure air from the sea, yet whenever the wind set from the island itself it must bring the effluvia along with it, and consequently an effect would be produced upon the troops.

Were there not upon the sand hills a number of huts or small barracks belonging to the French, in which their troops had remained?—There were.

Was it not practicable, at a very trifling expence, to have fitted them up for the reception of our sick?—I cannot positively answer that question, because my former answer is grounded upon the report of an officer, not upon my having seen them myself.

Have you not an official recognition of your services during your residence in Walcheren?—I have up to the 5th of September.

Have you this recognition about you?—I have. [The witness delivered in the letter, an extract from which was read.]

*“ Army Medical Board  
Office, Sept. 5, 1809.*

“ Sir ; On the 1st instant I had the pleasure to receive your several letters, one of the 19th, two of the 20th, two of the 27th, and two of the 28th, and yesterday I received one of the 29th, together with their respective enclosures. I have to regret with you the detention of the packet which ought to have arrived by his Majesty's ship *Eagle*, and by which some valuable time has been lost.—I now proceed to answer your letters according to their dates, and to inform you of the steps which have been taken thereon.—Referring to your letters of the 20th August, I have to acquaint you that the sick by the *Eagle* under Dr. Wardell and surgeon Inglis, by the *Ruby*, C. X. and Harmony, E. A. have arrived at Deal, the latter in charge of Messrs. Bruce and R. Brown. Dr. Wardell will be disposed of by the physician general ; Mr. Bruce has been appointed to the Military College at Great Marlow, and may be considered as replaced by surgeon Hume, late of the 79th regiment, now gazetted as surgeon to the forces.—Surgeons Inglis and Brown have been hitherto detained at Deal, but they have now been ordered to return to their duty ; I am sorry however to find by a report this day received from thence, that Mr. Inglis is on the sick list.—Immediately on receiving your letters, I submitted to head quarters such extracts of them as were of importance to the service, and all your requisitions, which will be spoken of hereafter ; I made also requisitions to the physician general and inspector general for the additional staff officers of their respective departments, and I ordered four staff surgeons, Messrs. Rice, Pooler, Short, and Taylor, to prepare for embarkation. I received yesterday from head quarters a requisition from sir Eyre Coote, which had been anticipated by my letter, inclosing the extracts of your's, and I have this day received a communication that “ Sir David Dundas thinks it proper that two Physicians, and about twenty other medical officers, should proceed to Deal, where shipping will be provided for their conveyance to Walche-

ren, and also stowage for four tons of medicines, &c.” The medical officers have accordingly been directed immediately to proceed thither, and I have requested that the stores may be forwarded to the same destination.—In emergencies of duty you do well to avail yourself of the services of every medical officer, whether physician or surgeon, in the way most beneficial to the sick and wounded troops.—Respecting the sick and wounded French, you have acted with equal prudence and attention to the interests of the service, in rendering their own means available before they have recourse to our stores.—I have noticed above my satisfaction at the arrangements you had made for the care of the sick and wounded French prisoners. I have the same reason to be satisfied with the prompt manner in which you have established regimental hospitals, in relief of the general hospital establishment, where the circumstances and stations of regiments have allowed it.—I am much concerned at the accounts of sickness among the troops ; I trust they will neither suffer for want of stores nor of medical men. Of the former there must, I think, be a most ample provision, notwithstanding the large requisitions made by Purveyor Stewart, which I hope are precautionary steps for the future, and not necessary for the present.—I have informed you above, that immediately on receipt of your letters, I applied for the number of staff officers required by you, i. e. for one deputy inspector, four physicians, four surgeons, one deputy purveyor, and twenty hospital mates ; and I have also given to you an extract of the reply which I have this day received.—I can only repeat my concern at the vexatious delay reported by your second letter of the 27th.—I am sorry that the circumstances of the service have prevented your sending the apothecary's and purveyor's returns of receipts and expenditure ; and also for the confusion which appears to arise from the mode in which the transports and storeships are arranged. I have always been of opinion, that one of the great advantages resulting from having medicines and hospital stores packed in divisions, was that only one division might be shipped on board any one transport or storeship, so that by distributing the divisions, the loss of one storeship would not be so severely felt when others of a similar nature were to be found elsewhere. Another advantage is, the faci-

lity of providing with medicines and stores, any large detachment which might be made from the main army, by sending with it a ship having one division of each on board. I am well aware, however, of the disadvantages alluded to in your letter, which perhaps could only be obviated by having always two or more vessels attached exclusively to the medical department, fitted purposely as hospital ships and hospital store ships, among which an equal distribution of stores might be made, but I fear this desirable object would be aimed at in vain.—I have above stated that I have forwarded your requisitions, which are now ordered to be supplied immediately, but no reply has been given respecting the hospital ships.—I now come to notice your letter of the 29th August.—I have hitherto acted and replied to your letters as if no alteration had been made in the original destination of the troops. The intelligence you have communicated, and all which has transpired here, induce me to hope that you will be able to detain an ample provision of medicines and stores, as well as of medical men, without any further or with only partial supplies. The orders however have been given for the supply of every demand, and no notification has been given to me of any alteration to be made therein.—I cannot conclude without expressing something more than surprise, that an officer, who has been so much on service as the purveyor Mr. Stewart, should not be aware that all demands for the sick that cannot be readily procured from the funds as articles of diet, should be made to the commissary general, especially wine, porter, &c. which he must be aware is never furnished on foreign service under the orders of this department. Rice, oatmeal, &c. are only supplied in small quantities, and in the first instance, so that there may be no want until a regular system can be established.

I am, Sir, &c. T. KEATE."

*J. Webb, esq. Walcheren.*

Do you recollect a letter addressed to sir Eyre Coots, signed by you, dated Middleburg, 31st August 1809, stating that the sickness of the army had increased so much, there was a great want of medical officers for their advantage?—I do.

Do you recollect a passage in that letter in which you say, "I have this moment received a positive order from the adjutant general, desiring that one physician, one staff surgeon, and one hospital mate,

should be sent forthwith to South Beveland. It is with concern I am obliged to add, that I have but one medical officer (a staff surgeon) whom I can possibly spare from this place, without leaving a portion of the sick unattended to?"—I recollect that perfectly.

Do you recollect a further passage, in which you requested that a fast sailing vessel might be sent to England for the purpose of bringing out the assistance so urgently required?—I do.

How long after the writing of that letter did you continue in a state of distress for medical assistance which you there describe?—Until the day I was taken ill, the 13th of September.

Do you recollect a letter addressed to the surgeon-general, and signed by you, dated the 20th of August, 1809, containing extracts of the same date, and of the 27th of August, signed by yourself, and addressed to the surgeon-general?—On the 20th of August I wrote two letters to the surgeon-general, the one containing requisitions for various articles of medical comforts, and the other for an addition to the staff; on the 24th or 25th of August those letters were most unexpectedly returned to the office of the Purveyor at Veer by a lieutenant of the navy; on the 27th of August, I inclosed the same letters to the surgeon-general, and with them a letter, explaining the circumstance, a part of which letter, as far as relates to that circumstance, I can produce to the Committee if I am permitted to do so.

Do you recollect at any time any representation having been made on the subject of the distress of the sick in gen. Picton's brigade?—I recollect representations of distress, from every brigade, but not from gen. Picton's brigade in particular.

In your letter of the 27th of August you have represented the 23d regiment as the most unfortunate, can you state to the Committee what was the loss of men in that regiment?—I cannot; but I beg to observe that at the first appearance of the disease the mortality was not great; it was considerable, and was increasing when I gave up the charge of the department.

In a passage in that letter you say, "The fever which affects the British soldiers assumes at present a continued form, and a very great proportion of the cases are slight; some, however, are of a more serious nature, and several have put on



symptoms decidedly typhoid;" did those symptoms decidedly typhoid arise out of the nature of the disease itself, or the crowded state of the sick?—Not out of the crowded state of the sick; I think it arose from the nature of the disease acting on peculiar constitutions.

Do you know that any transports were sent home with sick in a very crowded state, and without any medical attendants at all?—I do not know that any troops came home without medical attendants, nor can I say, from my own knowledge, that any sick were sent in a very crowded state; but from what I have heard of the embarkation of the men at Beveland, I think it is not improbable.

From the knowledge you have acquired of the disease contracted by the troops at Walcheren, and by your observation since you have returned home, are you of opinion that those once infected are likely to suffer permanently in their constitutions?—That depends entirely upon the effect that a continuance of the disease may produce upon the constitution itself; if it produces permanent internal disease, which we call visceral disease, the consequences must be very serious; if on the contrary it does not produce that effect, the effects of the disease will subside, and the men will become fit for service.

Is visceral disease a common consequence of the Walcheren fever?—It is.

Do you believe that in fact the mortality and disease in the island of Walcheren was at all or much increased by the want of medical assistants?—I think both must have been increased in some degree; but the arrangements were such of the medical attendants, that the most serious cases received the most attention and the best advice.

Supposing a person has been afflicted with the Walcheren fever once, will not the same person be more likely to have a recurrence of the disease in circumstances which, to another person, would not occasion that disease?—Undoubtedly; but that disposition will gradually diminish.

Will not this disposition continue to afflict the person for a considerable time?—It will.

Will not this pre-disposition to a recurrence to disease be greater in persons in the situation of common soldiers than in persons in a superior rank of life?—With respect to the constitution of the individual itself, I think not; but a private soldier is more exposed to the causes of disease, and

perhaps when recovering he continues to expose himself more to the causes of disease than persons in higher situations of life, consequently he may be more apt to relapse.

Among those causes is not a habit of intemperance one?—Certainly.

Besides the pre-disposition to recurrence of the disease itself, will not the soldier be liable to be affected by various other disorders connected with the disease, such as obstructions?—The risk of obstructions taking place depends as I conceive on the violence of the disease, its duration, and the particular constitution of the individual; if that individual has previously injured his constitution, the risk will be in proportion to that injury.

Will not the same effect be likely to be produced by the remedies themselves, which it may be necessary to exhibit to the patient in great quantity, such as bark, in consequence of the violence of the disease?—There is no doubt, that if bark is given injudiciously it may tend to produce visceral obstruction.

Are not liver complaints likely to be the result of a patient being afflicted with the Walcheren fever?—They are.

During the period you acted in Walcheren, were the medical practitioners of the island had recourse to?—To gain information from them relative to the nature of the disease, I had very early recourse to one of the most respectable practitioners in the island, and other medical officers acting immediately under me also availed themselves of all the information they could procure from respectable sources; afterwards, when we were much in want of medical aid, we attempted to procure assistance, but those who offered could speak nothing but Dutch, and as they did not appear in other respects to be very well qualified, I thought it better to endeavour to keep our men under the attendance of the English surgeons, than to give them nominal attendance from the persons who wished to have been employed by the English.

At what time did the Walcheren disorder first shew itself among the troops?—I believe in Beveland on the 19th, and about the 20th or 21st in Walcheren.

Up to the 27th of Aug. did not that disorder increase with very great rapidity?—It did.

What is the season of the year at which, from the information you collected from

the inhabitants of the island, when the disorder does begin, it is generally expected to abate?—It abates very considerably early in November, but the period of its termination depends upon the setting in of frosty weather.

After the progress of the disorder you had seen between the 20th and the 21st of Aug. was it your opinion that if the troops continued in the island of Walcheren, the disorder might be expected to spread generally?—It was.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

JAMES M'GREGOR, M. D. was called in.—  
Examined by the Committee.

Did you succeed Mr. Webb as chief of the medical staff of the island of Walcheren?—I did.

At what date did you take upon you the charge of the department?—I arrived on the 29th of September, and took charge two days afterwards.

Did you continue in charge of the department till the evacuation of the island?—I did.

Did the sick of the army during your superintendence experience any want of medicines, and particularly of bark?—They did not.

Did they experience any want of medical comforts, and particularly of wine and porter?—I know they did not.

Did the hospitals during the time you were in charge experience any want of bedding, or were the sick well accommodated?—The sick did not experience want of bedding; there were in a few instances two men in a bed from want of room.

Was there any material want experienced of medical officers?—The soldiers in the island, I believe, had at all times medical attendance, though the duty was excessively severe upon the medical officers.

Did you call in the assistance of any of the medical people of the island, and with what effect?—I did, I called in I think four, and attached them to the two battalions of the German Legion.

Did you find the arrangement succeed?—They were very usefully employed with those battalions.

Do you apprehend that if the army had been landed to carry on operations against Antwerp, it would have been exposed in the neighbourhood of Antwerp to any extraordinary sickness?—I never was at Antwerp myself; I have understood from the French officers that the country near Antwerp was healthy.

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Was there a sufficiency of medical assistance during the time of the sickness in Walcheren?—I have said that I know no instance of the soldiers wanting attendance, though the duty was so excessively severe as to occasion the illness of the officers.

Can you state whether there would have been any considerable difficulty in obtaining an additional number of medical assistants from England if they had been required?—I have understood there was great difficulty found in England in getting medical assistants.

Can you state to the Committee from what cause, whether from a want of giving them proper encouragement, or that they were not to be found?—I should think that if they had proper encouragement, a sufficient number might be found.

Have you had any experience of the effect of a fumigation by nitrous acid, in preventing contagion?—I have.

State to the Committee what the result of that experience has been?—It has been favourable to the use of the fumigation.

Was it constantly used in the different hospitals in Walcheren over which you had the superintendence?—It was not in every hospital, because there were no appearances of contagion existing, I directed it to be used in several.

Was not it generally of the gaol distemper or typhus fever our men died on the island of Walcheren?—It was not generally.

Do you know of the stock of bark in store at Walcheren being reduced so low as 300 pounds at any time?—I forwarded to the surgeon general a representation from the purveyor on the 3d of Oct. stating that he had in store bark only for two days.

When was any additional supply received from England?—To the best of my recollection no supply came after my arrival till about the 11th of October.

How was the bark obtained, in the meantime, for the use of the hospitals?—By purchase in the island, I understood, from an adventurer, a man who came out with bark for sale.

What do you mean by an adventurer?—A man who came out to offer bark for sale. From this country?—I understood so, but I never saw the man.

It was by an accidental circumstance of that kind that bark was obtained till further supplies came from England?—I find by my notes that 1,460 pounds of bark was purchased.

(2 H)

Supposing that adventurer had not had a quantity of bark for sale, the hospitals would have been without any supply?—I believe they would.

In that case might not a supply of bark, more than sufficient to cover the interval, have been procured from the navy?—I cannot certainly say the quantity of bark that might have been procured from the navy; I have understood that the quantity the navy had was not large.

„Did your treatment of the sick differ from that of your predecessor?—My duty was not the immediate treatment of the sick; that was left to the physicians and surgeons of the army, my duty was that of the general superintendence of the hospitals and the medical department.

Have you formed any opinion of the nature of the disease at Walcheren?—I have.

Have you the same opinion of the disease now which you had before you went to Walcheren?—I have, as I had been in the country at a former period.

Did not gen. Whettam, at Portsmouth, make every distribution in his power for the accommodation of the sick?—I know that he did before I went out.

Relative to the admittance of a number of sick into a certain hospital or barrack at Portsmouth?—I do not know what particular hospitals.

Did gen. Whettam admit, as far as his means allowed him, a competent number of sick into a barrack at Portsmouth, which was the subject of a request made by the surgeon general of the army?—Gen. Whettam provided the fullest accommodations for all the sick that offered.

On what day did you take charge of the hospitals in Walcheren?—Two days after my arrival in the island, which was the 29th of September.

Do you recollect about that period a recommendation from some medical officer in that island, that a certain quantity of port wine should be allowed to the convalescents?—I know that my predecessor did make that recommendation.

Do you mean to say that Mr. Webb made that recommendation?—After Mr. Webb's illness Mr. Burrows, for a short period, acted as inspector till I took charge.

Did you approve of that recommendation?—As far as it was practicable.

Was it practicable?—It was practicable to all the convalescents who were in hospital.

What was the number of convalescents

at that time?—I can only answer that by saying that the total sick of the army, including convalescents, when I arrived was 9,800, including officers.

How many of the 9,800 were allowed port wine, and in what quantity were they allowed it?—I cannot from recollection say the exact number, though it was the greater part of that number, perhaps about 9,000 of those.

Was that about the number that was under hospital treatment at that time?—About the number, I cannot say exactly, without reference to returns, which I could produce.

Is the committee to understand that there were 9,000 persons who were allowed port wine?—Certainly not; many of those cases did not require port wine; some of them had porter, some of them required neither the one nor the other.

Was there port wine enough for those that required it?—I believe there never was at any time after my arrival any want of port wine.

[The witness was directed to withdraw. —The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 15.

*Jovis, 8<sup>o</sup> die Martii 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTRUTHER, Bart. in the Chair.

Sir LUCAS PEPYS, Bart. again called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Having stated in your former examination that you were ordered about the 10th of Sept. last, to go to Harwich to investigate the disease of those who had returned from Walcheren, and that you went accordingly; and having stated what you conceive to be the nature of the disease, with which you said you were previously perfectly acquainted, explain to the Committee on what grounds it was that in your letter to the secretary at war, on the 27th of Sept., you stated as a reason for desiring to be excused from proceeding to Walcheren, that you knew nothing of the investigation of camp and contagious diseases?—It could not be supposed, after my letter to the secretary at war, of the 11th and 13th of Sept., in which I gave a detailed account of the disease, that I could be unacquainted with it, or have no knowledge of it. I con-

ceived therefore, that as they were in possession of that, they merely wanted the duties of an inspectorial investigation to take place, by which I understand that of attending to the distribution of the sick, that they should have proper billets, and not, as was then reported, be deposited in damp places, in churches, and ill-aired warehouses; that they should particularly have attention paid to the embarkation of the sick for England; that no dying persons should be sent on board the transports; that every transport should have a medical officer on board. Those I considered to be inspectorial duties, and as such declared myself not competent to them, not having ever been in the habit of them. But as to the knowledge of the diseases, it is perfectly clear I must have understood them from the letters of the 11th and 13th of Sept., which, if not before the House, I should hope will be before the House; those will plainly shew that I perfectly understood the nature of the disease.

On what occasion were those letters of the 11th and 13th of Sept. written?—They were reports made upon my going to Harwich; one from Harwich and the other from Colchester; the one on the 11th and the other the 13th. I went for the purpose of seeing the nature of the disease of those who were immediately landed, and those likewise who were in the barracks and hospitals of Ipswich as well as Colchester.

Have you any copies of those letters?—I have very imperfect ones.

In what department are they to be found?—In the war-office.

Were you ordered to deliver any plan for affording means of guarding convalescents from relapses, in order to render them more speedily effective?—I was commanded to do so through the adjutant general from the Commander in Chief; I sent in a plan, which I conceived would be probably very beneficial to the service, thereby to prevent relapses, and render the troops more speedily effective.

What is the date of that report?—I cannot exactly charge my mind; but it is the first letter I sent to the adjutant-general; I afterwards sent another.

In the letter which has been referred to, you simply make use of the term investigating camp and contagious diseases, how would you have qualified that to explain the meaning you have now affixed to that expression?—As the war-office were in possession of the opinion that I had given

upon the disease, I conceived the word investigating applied merely to the inspectorial investigation of it.

From whom did you receive the report that sick soldiers were lodged in ill-aired warehouses and damp places?—I really cannot charge my memory; no particular person gave me a special account of it; but it was a general opinion, that they were so; and I believe they were principally lodged in the East India company's warehouses at Middleburg.

Do you mean by general report, report from the medical persons employed in the island of Walcheren?—By no means.

Had you any official report upon that subject from any of the medical persons, or as to the mode of their being lodged at all?—I have never enquired into it, as it did not belong to me, but to the inspector.

Did the report reach you in such manner as to induce you to give credit to it?—Yes.

Did you hear from any persons that dying persons were improperly put on board transports?—I heard it frequently, and from what I heard at Harwich, I think it must have been the case; as 18 were not alive sufficiently to be carried to the hospital when I was there.

Do you mean that those 18 came out of one transport?—I cannot ascertain that; I merely speak from the report at Harwich; I had no sight of them myself.

Was that common report, or report from any medical person to you?—It was commonly spoken of by the head officer at the hospital at Harwich.

Did you see the 18 persons whom you have alluded to?—I did not.

Was a report made to you, in your official capacity at Harwich when you went to inspect the hospitals, that 18 persons had died under those circumstances?—Not officially, but merely in conversation.

Conversations with medical persons?—With the principal medical officer at the hospital at Harwich.

Who was that officer?—Mr. Ross.

Did you understand that the sick that landed at Harwich were embarked from South Beveland, or from the island of Walcheren?—I cannot answer that question, as I made no enquiry about it.

• At what time were you at Harwich?—Upon the 11th of September.

Did you make any representation to government of what you heard at Harwich or elsewhere on the disposal of the sick at Middleburg and Flushing, and of the state

of their arrival at Harwich?—I can answer that, only by desiring that reference may be made to the letter I wrote from Harwich; I made no representation of what I conceived to be passing at Walcheren or Beveland.

Have you reason to know that the first transmission of sick from the island of Walcheren was about the 13th of Sept.?—I only speak generally of the sick from Zealand; whether they came from South Beveland or Walcheren I cannot tell.

Did you understand that the embarkation from South Beveland took place under a pressure of military circumstances, which might interfere with the due accommodation of the sick?—I have stated, that I did not know from whence the sick came specially, but only generally.

Might not a fever of a more fatal kind than that which subsisted among the troops at Walcheren be generated on board the transports in which they came from that country, so that no inference is to be drawn as to the state of the sick at the time they were put on board?—If that had been the case, there would have been contagion in the different hospitals I saw at Harwich, Colchester and Ipswich, and there was no contagion; nor has there been any contagion. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

Lieutenant General Dow called in.—Examined by the Committee.

At what time did you take the command of the army in Walcheren?—I arrived on the 24th of Oct., and took the command, I think, on the 29th.

At the time of your arrival, was there not a very large proportion of the army sick?—Yes.

Were not you extremely anxious for their removal to England?—Yes.

Were any means left untried by you or by others, so far as you know, for the removal of the sick as fast as possible to England?—Certainly not.

Every possible exertion was made to get them removed to England as fast as possible, from the time of your arrival?—As far as relates to the means that were sent from England; and every arrangement was previously made for the removal of the sick on the arrival of the ships from England. I had the sick in readiness to embark the moment the ships came into the basin.

Do you recollect the date of the last

shipment of sick from Walcheren?—I think about the 26th of November.

If the evacuation of the island had been determined upon at the moment of your arrival, could it have been effected before the 26th of Nov., without leaving the sick to fall into the hands of the enemy?—That depended upon a variety of circumstances; in the first place, on the means sent; it depended also on the orders that might be given with respect to the evacuation of the island, and with respect to the demolition of the basin and arsenal at Flushing.

Supposing the means that were sent could not be increased, does it not follow that the army could not have evacuated the island of Walcheren without leaving the sick behind, if they had evacuated it before the 26th of November?—Unquestionably, if the means were not sufficient for the removal of the sick, they must have been left behind.

Was the demolition of the arsenal and the works of Flushing, and of the dyke and basin, completely effected before the evacuation of the island?—Certainly.

Describe what it was that was destroyed?—I have stated that in my public letter very minutely I believe, I cannot add to that; the floodgates were totally destroyed, all the masonry in the vicinity of the floodgates was destroyed, the great arsenal was entirely destroyed, it was burned down and the walls were afterwards shaken by mines; the dockyard was completely destroyed, the line walls and all the fortifications on the river, as far as not to risk the loss of the town by inundation.

Do you consider the basin as effectually destroyed, and the use of it as a receptacle of ships entirely done away?—Certainly.

How long do you conceive it to be before that basin can be put in order again?—I should conceive that was a question which might be better answered by an engineer; from the idea I had formed of it, I conceive certainly not under two summers; the difficulty of working in such a spot is very great, and the stench and exhalation which must arise from the basin, must considerably affect the mechanics and labourers.

Have you any means of knowing from what you heard while you were at Flushing, of any inconvenience that was actually experienced by the French naval force in the Scheldt, in consequence of

our having dispossessed them of Flushing?—The enemy was of course under the necessity of keeping their ships in the Scheldt, in place of the basin at Flushing; they were consequently exposed to the floating ice. •

Did you hear of any damage that was actually done to any of the ships before you came away?—I heard that three of them had suffered considerably, those that were at Antwerp.

Ships of the line?—Yes.

Did you hear particularly what the damage they had sustained was?—I think it was what is called their back broken; it was of course from no operation of ice, because there was none in the river at that time.

In your opinion, if the Austrian war had recommenced, would it not have been advisable to have kept possession of Walcheren?—It certainly would have been a very great diversion in favour of Austria; it must have employed a great force of the enemy in that quarter.

How do you think it would have employed a great force of the enemy?—Because the enemy had a very large army there when I commanded at Walcheren, and I conceive that if our force had continued there, they must have kept that army in its position.

State to the Committee how you conceive that an army in the state yours has been represented to have been by your letter, could have employed a large force of the enemy if they were disposed to employ that force elsewhere?—If the army under my command had not been reinforced, consequently the enemy might have diminished their army opposed to me.

With the force which you commanded at Walcheren, could you at any time have attempted any offensive operations beyond the island of Walcheren?—Certainly not. •

Had the French withdrawn nearly the whole or the greater part of that force, could you have done any thing more with the army under your command than the garrison duty within the island of Walcheren?—I should conceive not.

Do you recollect a letter signed by you, dated the 4th of Nov. 1809, containing this paragraph: "Notwithstanding the very reduced state of the army, yet I deem it sufficient to hold the town of Flushing until batteries are opened against it, and with the addition of 4 or 5,000 men, I could not in the present de-

fenceless state of the island attempt to cope with the enemy in the field?"—Yes.

Do you adhere to that opinion?—I am of the same opinion I had at that time; but circumstances changed afterwards.

What was the subsequent change of circumstances to which you allude?—The availing myself of inland inundation as soon as the rains commenced; I perceived that it was possible to inundate the country with fresh water by stopping the fresh water sluices, which of course greatly added to the security of my position.

What time subsequent to the 4th of Nov. did this change of circumstances take place?—I think about the 14th.

How long before the evacuation of the island took place were you apprized of the intention of Government to evacuate it?—The order for the evacuation was dated, I think, on the 13th of Nov.;—but my letter before the House will explain that perfectly; there was an intimation given, I believe, before that.

Did you recommend the evacuation of the island before it actually happened?—I never recommended the evacuation; it was not my duty to presume to recommend the keeping or evacuating it.

Did you never give an opinion to government in favour of the evacuation of it?—I believe not; I believe there was not a word said in my public letters upon the subject.

Was the repair of barracks going on while you were in the command of the island of Walcheren?—Yes.

At what period did the repairing of those barracks cease?—I really do not recollect.

Do you know that the repairs of those barracks were not carrying on till two days before the evacuation?—Very probably it might have been so; it was very proper if it was, for we might have been detained from circumstances.

What circumstance do you allude to, when you speak of the possibility of being detained?—The operations of the enemy, and the impossibility of our fleet getting through the Duerloo passage.

Were not those repairs of the barracks of which you have been speaking, necessary for the due accommodation of the troops?—Certainly, or otherwise they would have been stopped.

How soon after those barracks were repaired, would they have been in a state

to be inhabited by the troops at that season of the year?—I really do not know.

With what materials were those barracks repaired, materials of the island or materials from England?—I believe that they were repaired with some timber from the island, and with brick and lime from England.

Do you recollect any difficulty experienced, in setting fire to those barracks so repaired, when the troops left the island?—There was no difficulty in setting fire to them; but we could not set fire to barracks situated in a town, without endangering the buildings of the town.

Was not it found impossible to destroy them from the damp state in which they were?—I think it was possible to destroy them.

Were they destroyed in point of fact?—No, because that would have endangered the buildings in the town.

Is the Committee to understand from you, that no attempt was made to destroy any buildings by fire, which failed owing to the wetness of the buildings from their having been so recently repaired?—Not that I know of.

Were not some of those barracks, even at the time they were under repairs, inhabited by some of the troops?—In some barracks rooms were occupied by the troops, while the repairs were going on.

During the time that you commanded at Walcheren, were there any considerable improvements made in the works either of Flushing or about Veer, or in any other part of the island?—The works of the town of Flushing and of the town of Ter Veer, were in some degree repaired, and some batteries were established on the coast, and some works were thrown up between Ter Veer and Armuyden.

Did you continue in the command till the evacuation of Walcheren was complete?—Yes, as will be seen by my public dispatch of the 23d of December.

Previous to the evacuation, were all the new works which you had been employed in repairing or constructing destroyed?—The earthen works which had been repaired in Flushing were not destroyed; but the batteries on the coast were dismantled, and the platforms destroyed; it was not an object to destroy those earthen works, it was not a consideration.

What were your orders respecting the destruction of the works upon the island of Walcheren, and particularly those at Flushing?—My orders in that respect

comprehended the sea defences, and everything that related to a naval dépôt or naval arsenal.

Have you a copy of the instructions sent you, respecting the destruction of the naval dépôt and works at Flushing and the island of Walcheren?—I had no further instructions than appear in the secretary of state's letters to me on that subject, which I believe are before the House.

Did not those instructions order you to destroy the defences towards the land, as well as those towards the sea?—No.

Then is the Committee to understand, that the defences toward the land were meant to have been preserved?—There was no instruction to preserve them, they were all earthen works.

Allowing that they were all earthen works, would not it have taken the enemy a considerable time had they been thrown into the ditch to have reinstated those earthen works; and under this consideration, was not it considered by you of consequence, to render Flushing of as little importance to the enemy as possible?—It certainly would have taken the enemy a considerable time to have reinstated those works, but with regard to Flushing, the great object was to destroy the works towards the river; that I comprehended was the spirit of my instructions relative to the works.

Were the defences towards the river completely destroyed?—They were destroyed as low as the cordon and the terre plein; the reason I did not destroy them lower was, that I found the walls extremely rotten; and that if I had gone lower down I should have exposed the town to an inundation.

Were all the floodgates entering into the basin of Flushing destroyed before you left Walcheren?—Totally destroyed.

Was the basin revetted, or merely walled and friezed with planks?—It was not revetted; it was faced with timber.

Do you know what depth of water there is close to the sea line, and is it of sufficient depth to allow about half flood, of ships of the line lying within a couple of hundred yards of the wall?—That is more a naval question; but our line-of-battle ships lay, I think, sometimes within that distance off the line wall. I believe the deepest water is close in shore.

Did you receive your instructions in London previous to your taking the command in Walcheren?—I was not in London; I went directly from Jersey to the Downs, and from thence to Walcheren.

Had you any communication with any of his Majesty's ministers previous to taking the command of Walcheren?—No.

Had you any intimation afforded you of the intention of his Majesty's ministers to evacuate Walcheren previous to your arrival in the island?—No.

Would you have thought it consistent with the safety of your army, and the security of your position, to have destroyed the land-works of Flushing previously to the evacuation?—Certainly not. I had prepared every means in my power for the defence of those works to the last moment, although I dismantled all the works, yet I kept the works in the state they were in to enable me to arm them with field light artillery.

What do you mean by dismantling the works?—By removing the heavy guns, and destroying the platforms, &c. &c. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

E. W. C. R. OWEN, Esq. Capt. of his Majesty's ship the Clyde, again called in.  
—Examined by the Committee.

In your former evidence you have stated, that it was not until the 27th of July in the evening that you were aware of lord Huntley's expectations of your being unable to land at one time the whole of his force, consisting of 2,000 men: lord Huntley has stated, that on the 24th of July he had been informed by you that you had not the means of landing above 600 men at the same time; did either lord Huntley or you take any means by representations to the military or naval commander in chief to have this apparent difference of understanding upon this most important subject explained?—On the morning I think of the 24th lord Huntley was with me whilst I had some conversation with sir Home Popham, who made some of the arrangements under sir Richard Strachan's directions, and with sir Richard himself, upon the number of men we could probably land; and I expressed then a wish that we had the means of landing more: I believe my lord Huntley as well as myself thought the proportion small; but there was no wish expressed of having any particular number landed; nor had I ever afterwards, to my recollection, any conversation with lord Huntley on the subject; and certainly no wish was ever expressed to me that a number of men should be landed until the evening of the 27th: the transports boats would have doubled the

number those of the men of war could land; and by the men of war's boats we had the means of landing two field pieces and an howitzer, besides the number of troops that have been stated.

Did lord Huntley, upon the 27th, express any surprise or disappointment at the great difference between the number of boats actually provided, and the number which his interpretation of his instructions seemed to require?—Lord Huntley did express disappointment; and it was with a view to getting this point as well as some other explained, that I furnished him with a vessel as soon as the tide suited to go to the commander in chief.

Did you previously to your sailing from Deal make any representation to the naval commander in chief for the purpose of having the number of boats increased?—None; after the 27th there was no opportunity: there was the conversation before alluded to on the 24th.

By a paragraph in your instructions from sir R. Strachan, he observes, "keeping it always in your recollection that it is of the greatest importance to obtain possession of Cadsand," were you strongly impressed with a belief that the capture of the enemy's batteries in Cadsand was an important feature in this Expedition?—I certainly considered it a point of great consequence; my orders expressed it so; but it ceased to be of so much importance after the Expedition put into the Roompot.

Had the batteries of Cadsand been destroyed upon the 30th, would you have had the means afterwards of cutting off entirely the communication between Cadsand and Flushing, and of intercepting the great military reinforcements which during the siege got into Flushing?—By the capture of Cadsand we should either have secured or driven away the vessels which conveyed those reinforcements.

Did the state of the weather, during the 28th and 29th, admit of lord Gardner's squadron joining and co-operating in the Wiclin Passage with you in the operations against Cadsand?—We did not arrive till after dark on the 28th; there was nothing to my knowledge on the 28th to prevent lord Gardner's taking a position in readiness to co-operate with us; on the 29th he was too far to leeward.

On the 30th in the morning were the wind and weather such as to admit lord Gardner's approaching nearer to you?—Lord Gardner did approach nearer; he took a station off the Duerloo.



Had the Wielin Passage been secured upon the 30th, by the destruction of the enemy's batteries on Cadsand, might not the whole of our transports and vessels have passed into the West Scheldt without running for shelter into the Roompot?—I do not at all know what orders the transports were under: if they were ordered to the Stone Deep they would be to leeward.

Supposing the original destination of the transports and vessels had been the West Scheldt, and taking it for granted that the Wielin Passage had been secured, would not those transports and vessels have had a clear passage up as far as South Beveland without going into the Roompot?—Certainly they would.

How many years have you been employed upon the enemy's coast to watch their motions between Boulogne and the Texel?—Nine years nearly.

During that time can you recollect how long continuance you ever had of easterly winds at one time?—I have not the least idea.

Do you imagine a continuance of three or four weeks?—Yes, I have known a continuance of easterly winds for that time.

In the spring and during the winter, are not these long continuance of easterly winds generally accompanied with thick fogs which usually cover the whole sea between Holland and England, at which times it is impossible to discover objects at a few hundred yards distance?—There is a great deal of clear weather in general with easterly winds.

During such continuance of easterly winds and blowing weather, supposing that we had a large fleet of 20 sail of the line in the Downs, and as many at the Nore, would it be practicable for such fleets to sail to the north eastward for the purpose of protecting the Essex and northern coasts of England against any meditated attack from an enemy?—Certainly not.

Upon such occasions therefore would not such fleets become almost totally useless and inefficient towards giving protection to the northern coast?—They could not get there, except under circumstances of very fine weather.

From your great experience and knowledge of the enemy's coast, as well as from your deserved high naval character, no officer's opinion appears to me more to be respected than your's, respecting the importance of Flushing as a naval and military station, towards the safety and pro-

tection of the coast of England, where a fleet of English men of war might have been kept in constant readiness to have acted, and to have attacked the enemy the instant he quitted his own coast: State to the Committee of what importance you considered Flushing regarding it in this point of view, and having reference to the immense exertions making by Buonaparté to get up a naval force of from 40 to 50 sail of the line at Antwerp alone?—I consider the port of Flushing the most dangerous to this country of any the enemy has; and I doubt whether a force there can be well watched without having ships in the Downs and ships at Yarmouth also.

Do not you from that very consideration consider the possession of Flushing to have been of infinite importance to this country, could we have preserved it?—I think so.

After the fall of Flushing had you an opportunity of inspecting the basin, and if so, inform the Committee how many line of battle ships and frigates the basin at Flushing was capable of containing?—I had very little or no opportunity; plans of it have been taken.

Were not you on shore at Flushing after its capture?—I was; I walked through the town only, and saw the basin; I suppose it capable of holding 20 sail of the line, but I had no particular opportunity of making observation upon it.

Did you observe the sea line?—I walked once along it.

Was it of such a construction that you imagine that with ships of the line, gunboats, and bombs, without making any attack by land, it would have been practicable for a naval armament alone to have taken Flushing without landing any military force?—Not if it was properly defended.

You have stated that in order to watch a naval force stationed in the Scheldt, it would require a force in the Downs and also one at Yarmouth; do you mean that it would require an equal or nearly equal fleet to that of the enemy to be stationed at each of those points?—I think so, to watch it effectually.

If we had been able to retain effectual possession of the island of Walcheren and the port of Flushing, do you think that any naval force the enemy could have assembled at Antwerp and the higher parts of the Scheldt could have operated effectually from the Scheldt against the naval interests of this country?—I think not.

Would not the possession of Flushing alone, without having possession of the island of Walcheren, have been of equal importance to England and probably more by requiring a smaller garrison, and all the purposes of having a harbour to windward thereby be answered?—I think not, the Wielin channel is commanded by the batteries at Cadsand, and the inward part of the Duerloo by the batteries of Wycheter and Nolle.

Supposing that the inundation had extended as far as those situations mentioned by you, so as to have prevented the enemy having any batteries in those situations, would not that have effectually obviated the objections which you have stated to the possession of Flushing alone?—The Wycheter battery is on a high sandhill, part of a long ridge, and therefore could not have been inundated.

If it had been practicable between the 27th of July and the 8th of August to have passed a division of the fleet above Flushing, in your opinion might it not have thrown a great impediment in the way of the enemy, passing reinforcements to Flushing?—I think it was desirable to have a force there, and I only waited for lord Gardner entering the Duerloo to take that station myself.

Do you think that lord Gardner was able to enter the Duerloo; did the wind permit him?—The wind was fair.

Do you recollect that in the conversation you held with sir R. Strachan when you state sir H. Popham to have been present, on the subject of the boats, sir R. Strachan told you he had directed lord Gardner to assist you with his boats?—He did so; it was then I was informed lord Gardner was to co-operate with me.

After sir R. Strachan told you that lord Gardner's boats were to assist you, did you ask sir R. Strachan to supply you with any more boats?—Certainly not.

Had you any opportunity of examining the basin of Flushing after the demolition had taken place?—I had not.

Supposing the demolition to be complete, what do you apprehend would be the effect of the demolition on the naval interest of the enemy in the Scheldt?—At present the enemy has no other place to careen his ships; for the present it was understood that he had taken them into a creek above Antwerp to be sheltered from the ice during the winter, they therefore cannot be kept nearly so ready for sea.

Do you think, in consequence of the demolition of the basin at Flushing as stated, it would be safe or expedient for this country to neglect the enemy's force in the Scheldt altogether for the present?—Not to neglect it altogether; but I think you must have more notice before they can be ready for sea.

How much more time?—I do not feel myself adequate to give an opinion upon that; a great deal must depend upon the means of fitting out; at Flushing they lie with many of their stores on board, in the Scheldt they must have every thing brought from Antwerp in lighters.

What diminution of the naval force of this country do you think would be justifiable in consequence of what has taken place at Flushing?—The advantage of what has taken place I but consider as arising from the greater warning you will have before the enemy is ready for sea.

Is the Committee to understand from you, that that would justify the laying up any number of line-of-battle ships or frigates?—I think not; but it might prevent their being kept in an exposed anchorage.

If the enemy's ships have suffered in their coppers, where they are now, can their coppers be repaired?—I think not.

If they have lost their false keels in getting up there, can a false keel be put on; in short, can they be hove down in any way?—I think not, until some other place has been prepared for careening them.

What time would it take to make that arrangement?—I do not at all know what means they have near Antwerp; but the tide is there so rapid that I doubt their being able to do it in the stream at all.

Do you know from good information, where the French ships up the Scheldt were at the time of the evacuation?—The name of the creek was mentioned to me, but has escaped my memory; it is described as situate some distance above Antwerp, and as being sometimes barred across with sand. Whether the information was good or bad I had no means of judging.

Have you heard from good information that any of the French ships up the Scheldt had suffered from the situation in which they were obliged to lie?—Gen. Don had information that two had suffered materially.

You speak then from the information of general Don?—Yes.

What damage was that described to be?—That they had been on shore, and from the strength of the tide had been strained considerably.

Had they been got off, or remained on shore?—They had been got off, and hauled into the creek.

Were they supposed to have been rendered unserviceable?—I judged not, from the nature of the information.

In your opinion, will the naval equipments in the Scheldt be materially impeded by the demolition of the basin of Flushing?

—Yes, I think so, certainly.

Have you formed any opinion as to the length of time it would take to restore the basin at Flushing, with the means the enemy will probably apply to that object?—I have not. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

PETER PUGET, Esquire, Captain in His Majesty's Navy; called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Were you employed in the Expedition to the Scheldt?—Yes, I was.

In what capacity?—Resident Commissioner of the navy at Flushing.

Do you know any thing of the situation of the sick at Flushing and Middleburgh, after the capture of Flushing?—At Flushing, particularly: not at Middleburgh.

Describe the situation of the sick at Flushing, with the date?—Prior to the 31st of August I had frequent communications with gen. Picton, the commandant of Flushing, and he represented to me that several of the sick were without beds and blankets in their different barracks.

Were the communications made to you by gen. Picton verbal, or by letter?—Both verbally and by letter.

Had you any letter or letters from gen. Picton upon that subject?—Yes, on the 31st of August; it is an official letter. [The Witness delivered in the letter; which was read.]

*Flushing, 31st August 1809.*

“My Dear Sir; From the very ready disposition which you have always shewn to meet the wants and relieve the distresses of the troops in this garrison, by every means and exertion in your power, I am induced to lay before you our present situation:—We have nearly 800 men of the different regiments composing this garrison now in hospital; 600 of whom are lying upon the boards, without beds or paillasses.—If you could, by a representation to the admiral, procure us a supply for the present, the obligations of the service, and mine in particular, would be beyond all acknowledgment. With

many apologies for the trouble I give you, I have, &c. “T. R. PICTON.”

M. G. Commanding at Flushing.  
Capt. Puget, R. N.  
Commissioner at Flushing, &c.

Did you take any steps in consequence of that representation of gen. Picton, to provide the necessaries for the sick?—Yes, I did; I wrote immediately to admiral Otway, who was commanding officer at Flushing, and procured some beds from the men of war.

Were those beds immediately furnished from the men of war?—Twenty-four were furnished.

Did you visit the sick at that time at Flushing?—Yes, I did.

In what state did you find them?—Many of them sleeping on the boards, with their great coats on and knapsacks under their heads.

Where were they lodged?—In a great store-house in the arsenal, and in the large church opposite the commissioner's house, which I occupied.

Was there any want of medicine at that time among the sick?—I was informed by col. Cochrane, who commanded a regiment of detachments, that they had been without medicine, to the best of my recollection, four days.

What was stated to be the reason of their being without medicine?—The want of medicine at Flushing I apprehend.

Is it consistent with your knowledge, that at the time at which the troops were without medicine for four days, there was a quantity of medicine on board vessels in the Roompot, or in some other part near Walcheren?—Shortly after the 31st of August, general Picton was taken ill, and during that time I frequently saw him on the subject of the sick; and in consequence of those conversations, I conceived it my duty to go over to Ter Veer, where transports were, and there to examine them in my official situation as commissioner of the navy; on the 25th of September following, I called on the agent of transports lieutenant Thomas, to state to me what description of transports he had under his charge; he made a return of the transports with medicines at Ter Veer, and their arrivals are in the margin.

[The witness delivered in the return, which was read, together with the letter accompanying it.]

*Nile, Ter Veer, 25th September 1809.*

“Sir; Herewith you receive an account

of the cargoes of the transports having medical stores, purveyor's stores, and camp equipage. I have, &c.

SAM. THOMAS,  
Agent for Transports.

"*Captain Puget, R. N.*  
"*Commissioner of the Navy at Flushing, &c.*"

Is the Committee to understand that those transports having medicines on board, continued unladen from the time of their arrival to the 25th of September, when you went to visit them?—The one I think arrived on the 31st of August, the other two on the 2d of September; they were certainly untouched as to medicines on the 25th of September; it appears so by the agent's report.

Can you state the circumstances to which that was owing?—I cannot certainly.

To whom ought those transports to have been reported upon their arrival at Ter Veer?—I apprehend that the transports containing medicines were under the medical department, and of course subject to their orders.

When you visited the sick laying in the different places you have described, had you any conversation with the medical persons then superintending the sick?—I had no conversation but with general Picton, and the succeeding officer general Montresor.

What steps were taken by gen. Picton or gen. Montresor, to procure medicines?—General Picton was ill when he was succeeded by gen. Montresor; I was called on by him for a report of the transports at Ter Veer, and with which I furnished him.

You have stated that the sick, according to the report you had heard, were for four days altogether without medicines, do you mean to say, that between the 31st of Aug. and the 25th of Sept. when you visited the transports at Ter Veer, there was a deficiency of medicines for the sick?—I merely mean to confine myself to the 4 days, as stated to me.

Were those four days previous to or after the 31st of August?—I apprehend after the 31st of August.

You have stated that 24 beds were issued from the navy for the use of the sick, how long did the deficiency of bedding for the sick continue?—I have seen men in the large store-house lying on the floors apparently ill, with their great coats on and knapsacks under their heads in lieu of beds, after the 25th of September.

And before that period?—Before that period certainly.

Over how long a time do you mean to extend that description of men, lying more or less in their great coats with their knapsacks for pillows and without any bedding?—I cannot speak from recollection, and I have no note of it; but I think, to the best of my recollection, to the middle of October from the 31st of August.

There are mentioned in the lading of the transports so many bales of bedding, can you inform the Committee how many beds a bale of bedding contains?—No.

Was there a great mortality among the sick who lay in the exposed situation stated by you?—I do not know, the mortality was very great; but I cannot say whether of those that were taken care of, or those sleeping in their great coats.

Do you know any thing of any requisition of money made on the inhabitants of Flushing after the surrender of the place?—The mayor of Flushing, Mr. Beeker, informed me that the commissioners of public and private property had seized 7,000 guilders belonging to the poor at Flushing.

Who were the commissioners?—Gen. Sontag, capt. Lawford of the navy, and col. Walker of the 51st or 52d regiment.

Do you know of any representation made upon that subject by the mayor and principal inhabitants of Flushing?—Yes; I told the mayor when he represented the circumstance, that I was convinced his Majesty's government would on a representation order the money to be restored immediately.

Was any representation made, so far as you are informed?—Yes; the mayor informed me, that accompanied by Mr. Parker and Mr. Rohan, two of the magistrates of Flushing, they made a written representation of this circumstance to sir Eyre Coote.

Was any claim made for the church bells at Flushing, so far as you know?—Yes, it was one of the articles included in the representation to sir Eyre Coote; at least so I was informed by the persons who went up with that representation.

Do you know of the mode of payment that was adopted by the commissariat for stock and other articles purchased for the British troops in Zealand?—Merely by report.

What report have you heard upon that subject?—They were paid half in money and half in bills.

Have you heard what were the consequences of that mode of payment, whether it did or not enhance the price of the articles to the British troops?—I was informed at Flushing, that if hard money was paid for cattle, it would have been procured much cheaper.

Was the price of cattle raised when the inhabitants of Zealand came to understand the mode in which they were to be paid in consequence of that mode of payment?—I do not know whether by that mode of payment the price of cattle was raised, but it certainly did rise in price.

Do you know that any of the paper issued by the commissariat was offered to sale by the persons who received it in payment at a very considerable discount?—I was informed by Mr. Barker, one of the magistrates of Flushing, that the government bills could be purchased at a price inferior to their amount in this country.

Do you know or have you heard from any good authority, of any particular price at which any of those bills were purchased, and by whom?—No, I have not.

Do you know the person who was in charge of the medical department in the garrison of Flushing, at the time you have described the sick to have been without bedding?—I understood at the time, that Mr. Webb had the charge of the medical department in the island of Walcheren.

Who was the resident medical officer in the garrison of Flushing?—I do not recollect his name.

Was the inconvenience you observed the sick to be exposed to, immediately upon their landing from South Beveland?—It was before the landing from South Beveland and after too; I allude to the garrison of Flushing.

Was the letter from gen. Picton to you an official letter?—I have mentioned already it was an official letter.

Was the report from the agent of transports also an official letter?—Certainly it was.

Did you communicate those official letters to your department at home, the navy board?—I communicated them to admiral Otway, at least the substance of them.

Did you communicate them to the navy board at home?—I did not communicate them to the navy board, because I did not conceive it was part of my duty.

Did you transmit them to the admiralty?—I did not transmit them to the ad-

miralty; my exertions were at the request of gen. Picton; I exerted myself in consequence of gen. Picton's wish, but certainly I did not conceive that to be the immediate line of my duty.

How did you communicate these facts to adm. Otway?—To the best of my recollection I sent a copy of gen. Picton's letter to adm. Otway, and begged that he would have the goodness to order a supply of beds, and that I would receive them upon my charge.

How did you communicate the return respecting the transports to adm. Otway?—I think I saw adm. Otway upon the subject, and communicated to him the information I had received about the transports; my duty as commissioner, by the printed instructions, is to see that no improper detention takes place on the part of the transports.

Did you report this detention of the transports to the navy board or to the admiralty?—I was directed by the admiralty not to interfere with the transports, but to confine myself merely to my duty as commissioner of the navy.

You have just said it was part of your duty as commissioner of the navy, to see that there was no improper detention of transports, why therefore did you not communicate to those departments such detention?—It is mentioned in the instructions that it is a commissioner's duty so to do, but I was afterwards directed not to interfere with the transports, as capt. Woodroffe was there to transact the duties.

Why then did you interfere so far as to call for those returns, and why, having so interfered, did you not transmit them?—I did it with a spirit for the good of the service, and certainly according to the wish of gen. Picton and gen. Montresor.

Do you know what length of time these transports which had medicines on board were detained?—No, I do not; I had my sufficient duty afterwards in the payment of monies; and in three offices I performed, commissioner, store-keeper and clerk of the cheque, which confined me completely at Flushing.

How soon after, observing the sick in the distressed situation you have just mentioned, did you hear of there being those transports at Ter Veer?—I cannot speak as to dates, it was between the 31st of Aug. and the 25th of Sept. but I should suppose about 15 days after I had seen general Picton.

Were immediate measures taken by you

or by any other person at your desire for bringing bedding and medicines from Ter Veer to Flushing for the supply of the sick?—I considered the transports with medicines to be under the medical board, and having reported to the general of the garrison where I was resident, I of course conceived I had discharged my duty.

Do you know what answer was returned by sir E. Coote to the representation you have mentioned to have been made by the mayor of Flushing?—I understood that sir E. Coote ordered the 7,000 guilders to be returned, and that the representation was sent to his Majesty's government.

Since your return from Flushing have you either verbally or by written communication by letter communicated either to the navy board or the admiralty any of the circumstances you have now been detailing?—I did not conceive it to be my duty to do so, and I did not.

Were the commissioners for public and private property, commissioners for the captors to ascertain what was booty, or were they commissioners for his Majesty's government?—They were commissioners to determine what was private property as belonging to individuals, or public property as belonging to the French.

The returns produced by you relative to the transports you have stated were official papers, did you consider it a part of your duty to keep in your possession original papers which you officially called for, and not to transmit them to your department?—In the course of the service there are many papers which are kept by officers; I have now by me most of the official documents with the navy board, which I do not think it necessary to send in to the board, and I did not conceive that to be one.

Are returns, which you may call for among the number of those papers which you think it not necessary generally to transmit?—I generally transmit returns certainly, but this document did not belong to the navy board.

Did col. Cochrane report his want of medicines to you officially, or in the course of conversation?—I think it was at gen. Picton's house, when speaking of the want of medicines.

Did you take any steps to get the medicines that were required?—I think it was merely a subject of conversation with admiral Otway afterwards.

Was what you reported of the commis-

sioners taking these guilders from the poor, a subject of conversation also, or represented to you officially?—The mayor came to me, I apprehend officially; and I advised him to go to col. Mosheim, the civil commandant, and make his representation there.

Was adm. Otway acquainted with the communication made by the mayor to you?—Yes, I think he was; I think I could state the communication I made to admiral Otway upon that subject.

Did you continue at Flushing till after the evacuation?—I was there from the 19th of August until the evacuation.

What became of all the naval stores that were found at Flushing; were they carried away, or were any part of them destroyed?—Those that were fit for ship-building were, I believe, the whole sent to England. There were some spars I was directed by adm. Otway officially to keep for the repair of the basin, and those I believe were not sent to England.

Can you inform the Committee what became of the artillery belonging to the garrison; gun carriages, and different stores of that kind?—No, I really cannot.

Can you inform the Committee, upon the average, what were the number of sick during the period you have mentioned that were lying without beds?—No, I cannot.

Can you state the smallest number?—No; I have been through the large storehouse and the large church, almost every day through the large storehouse, but I cannot even guess at the number; there were a great many people lying about in their great coats throughout the day; and it is impossible to distinguish the sick but by their countenances.

At the time of the evacuation, in whose department was the removal of the guns and different military stores?—Capt. Graham Moore on the part of the navy, and I have heard col. Hay on the part of the army.

You cannot inform the Committee whether the guns belonging to the garrison were removed or left at Flushing?—I cannot; I was not on shore after the 26th of Nov. I was ordered on board the Blake to make several payments on the part of the navy to the artificers, and the people employed in the demolition of the works.

Can you form any estimate of the value or amount of the plunder or booty that was captured from the enemy at Flushing, and upon the island of Walcheren?—I have never heard a word respecting it.

You have stated that the inhabitants of Flushing were obliged to take bills in part of payment for their cattle, and that those bills were sold at a loss, were they sold at a greater loss than the regular course of exchange?—I have already mentioned in my evidence that it was only mentioned to me by Mr. Parker, that that was the case in South Beveland, and certainly not in Walcheren.

You do not recollect the name of the medical man who superintended the department of the sick where you saw the people lying in great coats?—No, I do not.

Did you report to him that there was medicine and bedding in those transports after you had found them there?—I reported it to general Montresor.

Did you acquaint the medical person there, that there was that in store?—I did not know him, not even his person; there was a continual change there of the medical department coming to look at the sick; I apprehend from other places; they were continually about the streets, but I cannot say who was at the head of the medical department at Flushing.

From the time you observed the sickness, was it not very rapid among the troops?—Beyond any thing I have before observed.

Is it in your recollection when Mr. Webb was taken ill and incapable of acting?—No, I cannot speak from my recollection, but I rather apprehend it was the latter end of September; the people were taken ill very fast there.

Can you inform the Committee whether you did not observe that many others of the medical men were taken ill besides Mr. Webb, and incapable of acting?—I believe the illness was almost universal to the people living on shore.

Beyond what, in your conception, any moderate supply of medicine could have provided for?—It certainly would require a great quantity of medicine to provide for the whole of the sick.

Were the storehouses you have described wind and weather proof, or such places as even persons in health could not sleep in without the danger of taking cold?—The large storehouses in the dock-yard was certainly an excellent barrack; I think in the large church there were some holes made by shells in the roof of it; I am not acquainted with the other parts.

You never was in South Beveland?—Never. [The witness was directed to withdraw.]

CHARLES WILLIAM PASLEY, Esq. Captain in the Engineers; again called in.—Examined by the Committee.

How long have you served in the corps of engineers?—I served eleven years and six months in the corps of engineers and six months in the Royal Artillery on my first getting my commission.

During that time, have you been much employed; and, if you feel no objection, state to the Committee in what services you have been employed during that time?—I served two months in Gaeta under the prince of Hesse as a volunteer; afterwards I served in the campaign in Calabria, under sir John Stuart; I was a fortnight in Stralsund at the time it was besieged by the French; I served at Copenhagen, in Spain; and I need not add, on the last Expedition.

Were you employed to reconnoitre Cadsand previously to the sailing of the late Expedition?—I was; I answered that question, I believe, on a former night.

State generally the substance of your report.—I have a copy of that report with me. [The witness delivered in the report; and it was read.

*"H. M. S. Raven off Walcheren, 13th of July, 1809.*

"Sir; I have to report to you, that in execution of your orders, I sailed on the 8th instant from Deal in this sloop commanded by captain Hanchett.—The weather was so very unfavourable, that we could do nothing till yesterday, when we had a good opportunity of reconnoitring the coast of Cadsand. The whole of the beach of that island from Breskens towards Cassandria appears fit for landing troops, but the best part is near the Wulpen signal-post. Near a beacon, about two miles to the west-ward of this signal-post, we observed a battery of four guns: on the other side of the signal post is a second battery in which we counted five guns, that can bear in a direct line perpendicular to the coast, but it is probable that there may be more guns in this battery, as it seems constructed so as to be able also to flank the beach. These two batteries are about three miles distant from each other: the whole of the beach between them is good, and the sand-hills behind it are low and easy of access.—In taking these observations, captain Hanchett and myself went up in boats to within about three miles and a half of Flushing, standing as near to the coast of

Cadsand as possible, so that the two batteries fired over us. We did not perceive any creek or obstacle, such as is marked in some of the charts, to prevent troops marching from this part of the coast towards Breskens. On the point near that place, opposite to, Flushing, we observed a third battery, in which we reckoned six or seven pieces of cannon. The guns of all the batteries appear to be either *en barbette*, or on traversing platforms, so that they may easily be taken by storm.—This morning we examined the coast of Walcheren near Domberg, which appears extremely favourable for a disembarkation. The sand-hills there are somewhat higher than those of Cadsand, but very accessible, and when occupied by troops they will command the country towards the interior of the island. On West Cappel-point is a battery said to contain seven guns; and about a quarter of a mile to the westward of the church of W. Cappel (according to the bearing in which we viewed it) is a second battery of the same force. There are no other guns mounted along the coast between this and Den Haek, so that troops may land unmolested by any thing but field-pieces.—Captain Bolton of the *Fisgard* frigate informed me, that the beach from W. Cappel towards Flushing is equally good; but the sand-hills there are in general higher, more steep and irregular in their form, so that there will be greater difficulty in forcing a landing on that side in face of an enemy. There are some batteries on this part of the coast; but as I did not see them myself, I refer for an account of them, to the reports made by the naval officers to sir R. Strachan.—From the breadth of the West Scheldt it appears to me, that if we occupy Cadsand, it will be possible to disembark troops up that river without being under the necessity of waiting for the fall of Flushing, so that active operations may be carried on both in Walcheren and further in land at the same time if thought proper. I hope you will excuse my taking the liberty of offering this remark, which does not come within the precise limit of my instructions.—I have, &c.

C. W. PASLEY,  
Capt. Royal Engineers."

"N. B.—It may be essential to the success of any enterprise in this part, to have with the Expedition some of the most intelligent English smugglers, and to press the Walcheren fishing boats before the transports appear. By this measure,

which I believe has been already recommended by Captains Bolton and Hanchett, the best information may be had of the actual state of the posts, which it may be necessary to attack."

When you arrived off Cadsand with lord Huntley's division of the army, did the defences of Cadsand appear to you to be much in the same situation as when you had first reconnoitered?—They were exactly the same; the second time I observed two batteries I had not observed the first time, but those were at some distance from the place proposed for the landing, so that I conceived them of no consequence with regard to the object of a landing there.

Do you mean to state that you believe those batteries to have been constructed since the first time of your reconnoitring?—No, certainly not.

You have in your former evidence stated to the Committee, that upon the 30th of July there did not appear to be any difficulty in landing; upon what grounds did you form such opinion?—The two batteries upon the flanks of the line of coast proposed for the landing of the troops appeared to be about three miles distant from each other, so that if we landed nearly in the centre between the two, I conceive it probable that not a single shot from either battery would have touched a boat; if we landed not in the centre between the two batteries, I conceive that four or five guns is no obstacle to prevent troops landing; we might have lost some few men; I conceive we could have taken them by the bayonet.

How did it happen that you, as chief engineer to lord Huntley's division of the army, did not know that a vessel with entrenching tools was with you until the morning of the 30th?—The arrangements for sending engineers and entrenching tools with the Marquis of Huntley's division were made only a few days before we sailed; it was necessary completely to unload a small brig, and partly to unload several other ordnance vessels, in order to put a proper assortment of tools for the service of the division on board the small brig; at the time I left the Downs, with a detachment to join the marquis of Huntley's division, which was on the morning of the 27th July, this vessel with entrenching tools was not ready, she was not ready at the time we sailed. The marquis of Huntley's division sailed from Ramsgate roads whilst this vessel was fitting



out in the Downs; I reported that I expected a vessel of this description to the marquis of Huntley, to general Montresor, and to commodore Owen, but the arrival of the vessel was not known to me, nor could I possibly know it till the morning of the 30th; when I saw the master of the vessel he reported to me, that he had been in the convoy the day before; but I had only his word for that, I do not know it.

Were you employed at the siege of Flushing?—I was employed during part of the siege.

When did you join the army before Flushing?—I reported my arrival to col. Eyers on the night of the 7th of August at Middleburg; according to his order I landed the detachment under my orders on the morning of the 9th, and was put on duty in the night of the 9th for the first time.

In what state of forwardness did you observe the trenches and batteries to be on the 9th at the time when you joined?—I saw part of the works on the morning of the 8th, at that time in front of West Sonburg there was a five gun battery and a six mortar battery not quite completed, there were about 600 yards of trench work done near the same; that was the state of the works in the centre. I had an opportunity of examining the works on the right on the afternoon of the 9th instant; at that time gun and mortar batteries were begun, but in a very imperfect state; there was no battery on the left at that time finished, but I believe two batteries were begun on the left in front of general Fraser's division.

In what time do you conceive it would have been practicable to have completed the same extent of works, had the army been able to furnish a sufficient number of workmen to have employed upon the working parties?—Eight hundred men would have completed the whole of the works they had done in front of West Sonburg in 24 hours, in the state I found them. With regard to the other works I have mentioned, they were in so imperfect a state at the time I saw them, that I can give no positive opinion.

From your experience as an engineer, can you inform the Committee whether the defences of Flushing were of that nature that it might have been retained and defended without reference to keeping any other parts of the island of Walcheren?—I conceive that Flushing might

be made a very strong post. I had the honour of presenting a report on the subject to lord Chatham; in which I stated that, with a moderate garrison, I conceived it might be defended against the whole military force of the French empire.

Do you mean without retaining any other parts of the island of Walcheren?—I did not enter into that discussion at all; because I conceived the defence of Flushing to be the most important point in the island of Walcheren.

Have you any copy of the memoir or report you made to lord Chatham on the subject of the defences of Flushing?—I have an extract of the report I made to lord Chatham. I should have made a report at the same time upon the defence of the whole island, only that I was badly wounded, and had not an opportunity of reconnoitring it; and although my opinion goes that it might be defended, I should not wish to speak on what I have not actually seen. [The Witness was directed to withdraw.—The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 16.

*Luna, 12<sup>o</sup> die Martii, 1810.*

STEPHEN RUMBOLD LUSHINGTON, Esq. in the Chair.

RICHARD WHARTON, a Member of the House, attending in his place;—Examined by the Committee.

Is it your duty as secretary of the treasury to superintend the preparation of the account ordered by this House of the total expence incurred by the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—It is my duty to send the orders to the several departments of expenditure, and to take the returns from those departments.

Do you now hold in your hand an abstract of the several accounts received in obedience to that order from the several departments?—I do.

What is the total amount of expence, as it appears by that account, incurred by the late Expedition to the Scheldt?—The total of the extraordinary expence incurred is 834,275*l.* 10*s.* 7*d.* of which 211,565*l.* 1*s.* 7*d.* was incurred after the evacuation of South Beveland, as far as that distinction can be taken by the departments.

State to the Committee the principle upon which those accounts have been prepared by the respective departments!—The departments ascertained as accurately as they could all the expence incurred by them, which would not have been incurred if the Expedition had not taken place.

Is the Committee then to understand that the sum of 834,275*l.* 10*s.* 7*d.* is the total expence that has been incurred by the late operation in the Scheldt?—The several departments have taken great pains in ascertaining the exact amount of the extraordinary expence, and that sum is the aggregate of their several accounts put into my hands.

Have you any means of judging of the accuracy of that account?—I have no other means of judging of the accuracy of that account, than the assurance I received from the departments who gave in these papers.

Do you undertake to say you know that account to be just and true?—I received from the several departments returns pursuant to the orders delivered to them, signed by the proper officers in each of those departments. I hold in my hand those accounts which are termed appendixes to the general abstract which I have brought down to lay upon the table of the House, signed by the officers; but I cannot further answer for their accuracy than from the reliance I have upon those officers.

Can you judge with greater accuracy respecting the truth of these statements, than any gentleman who reads the accounts when laid upon the table?—I apprehend not.

Are not these accounts as much authenticated as any public accounts, and in the manner in which public accounts presented to this House usually are?—Exactly in the same manner as all accounts are with which I have had any thing to do since I have been in office.

Mr. Wharton delivered in the account, which was read, as follows:

Total extraordinary expence, so far as the same can be made up, of the late Expedition to the Scheldt; 834,275*l.* 10*s.* 7*d.* Out of which, the Charges incurred by the occupation of the island of Walcheren, after the return of the troops from South Beveland and the other positions on the Scheldt, are 210,963*l.* 1*s.* 5*d.* [The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

VOL. XV.—*Appendix.*

17.

*Martin, 13<sup>e</sup> de Martin, 1810.*

The Right Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTETHUR,  
Bart. in the Chair.

The Right Hon. Lord Viscount CASTLE-  
REACH, a Member of the House, at-  
tending in his place; was examined  
by the Committee.

Does your lordship recollect whether or not naval co-operation against Flushing, in the first instance was understood before armament sailed from England?—My conception was, that the naval force that was directed by the admiralty instructions immediately upon the armament arriving off Walcheren to enter the West-Scheldt, and to take a position to the south-east of Flushing, was for the double purpose of cutting off the communication between Cadsand and Flushing; and of being prepared to co-operate with the troops in an attack upon Flushing.

Did your lordship conceive that any hope was entertained that Flushing might be induced to surrender without recourse being had to a regular siege; and upon what consideration was that hope founded?—I think the information received induced a belief, that in all probability the reduction of Flushing could only be accomplished through the operations of a regular siege; but I conceived at the same time that some expectation was entertained, if the garrison of the place was not reinforced, that upon the appearance of so formidable a military force before the place, it might have been induced to surrender, more especially if an effort was made against the town by bombardment on the sea-side, and particularly if the enemy's force should have committed itself in operations without the town, and have been driven back with loss.

Did your lordship understand that any plan had been proposed, different from that pointed out in the naval instructions, of operating by the West Scheldt?—I certainly recollect that other modes of operation had been discussed, but when the armament sailed, I considered the operation by the West Scheldt as that which had been determined on, and was to be carried into execution.

Was your lordship acquainted with sir R. Strachan's letter of the 24th of July last to the secretary of the admiralty, and did your lordship communicate its con-  
(2 K)

tents to lord Chatham?—I observe from the date of this letter, it was written when I was absent from town and on the coast; it may possibly have been communicated to me whilst I was at Deal, but never having received it officially from the admiralty, I did not make any communication of it to lord Chatham.

Did your lordship communicate to lord Chatham the substance of sir R. Strachan's conversation with lord Mulgrave and your lordship, as stated in the admiral's evidence before the Committee?—[Vide letter, beginning "Did either lord Castle-rough or lord Mulgrave," ending "we should do very well."]—It is extremely difficult, at this distance of time, to speak to conversations on subjects that were discussed from day to day, and without any impression on my mind that I should be called on at this distance of time to speak to the result: I do not remember being present at a conversation of the nature now read to me; I have no difficulty in stating, that in the communications I had from time to time with sir R. Strachan, I did understand his mind, as the minds of many other officers I communicated with, to be impressed with the difficulties of the service; but I never did understand sir R. Strachan to express any professional opinion upon the impracticability of it.

After the Expedition to the Scheldt had been determined upon by his Majesty's ministers, to whom did your lordship entrust the arrangement for the naval and military parts of the Expedition, so as to be certain that the commanders in chief of the navy and army clearly and distinctly understood the plan committed to their execution?—It was my duty, as secretary of state, to signify his Majesty's commands, with respect to the Expedition, to the board of admiralty, and also to the commander in chief of the land forces; the orders conveyed to those respective services will explain the principles upon which the service was to proceed; I apprehend that it rested with the commanders in chief of the respective services to concert with each other as to the best mode of carrying those instructions into execution.

As your lordship seems convinced that the greatest possible celerity and rapidity of motion was essential towards the accomplishment of that part of the Expedition destined against Antwerp, did your lordship adopt any and what arrangements in the naval and military part of the Ex-

pedition and equipments for securing every possible celerity?—That the success of the Expedition must mainly depend upon the celerity with which it was carried into effect was a principle perfectly understood with both services; but as to the mode of carrying the service forward with that degree of celerity, it was a discretion that must necessarily rest with the officers of the respective services.

By whose suggestion or advice was it determined to send with the army destined to Antwerp a large body of cavalry, a vast train of heavy artillery, artillery horses, waggons, ammunition, and a variety of stores and supplies, which, exclusive of the immense expence and consequent delay, involved in complete and dangerous operation the trusting our army into the heart of an enemy's country; at the same time that a more obvious and rapid mode of advance by the Scheldt presented itself, in which the navy and army could have co-operated with and assisted each other?—The equipments of the army were framed upon the requisition of the person in the chief command.

As a possibility of taking Antwerp towards the land by assault, or by a *coup-de-main*, appeared extremely uncertain, and the town of Antwerp towards the river was totally defenceless and open, what motives influenced your lordship to prefer the uncertain and dangerous, as well as tedious experiment, of attacking Antwerp towards the land, when our troops and seamen could have entered the town by the river the moment the fleet and army reached Antwerp?—I consider the particular mode of attacking Antwerp necessarily rested with the commanders of the respective services to decide, and that it must necessarily have depended upon circumstances to be judged of and determined upon the spot by them.

Was there any plan formed for the attack of Antwerp besides that which included in it in the first instance the possession of Cadsand and the Wielin passage?—No other plan was formed and determined upon; I have stated before, that other modes of operation had been conversed upon and discussed, but that the plan of operating by the West Scheldt, which included in it the possession of Cadsand, and particularly the disarming of the batteries on Cadsand, so as to enable the armament to enter by the Wielin passage, was the plan of operations that was definitively determined upon.

Was not the success of that plan dependent as much upon the state of the wind as upon the state of the enemy's force in Cadsand?—All combined operations must necessarily be subject to the effect of the winds, but I did not conceive that that operation was more exposed to their adverse influence than any other that could have been decided upon.

According to the information your lordship had at the time of the sailing of the armament, within what number of days did your lordship conceive it to be necessary for the armament to arrive at Santvliet, in order to afford a probability of the capture of Antwerp?—I apprehend that no precise calculation could be made upon such a point; I certainly considered that the sooner the armament arrived at Santvliet, the greater would be the probability of success.

Does your lordship wish then to be understood as stating, that there was no calculation formed as to any particular time within which it appeared to be absolutely necessary that the army should arrive at Santvliet in order to afford a probability of success?—I apprehend that no such calculation could be formed; that it must depend upon the force the enemy were enabled to collect, what the prospect of success might have been at any particular period.—[The letter from lord viscount Castlereagh to the earl of Chatham, dated 21st August 1809, was read. Mil. Papers, No. 5.]

Did your lordship conceive at that time the capture of Antwerp by the armament to be probable?—In order to answer that question, I must beg to refer to lord Chatham's letter to which it is an answer; I conceive his lordship in that letter to have represented, the great advantage of Flushing being reduced at the moment it was; the words are, "I may now congratulate your lordship on the fall of a place so indispensably necessary to our future operations, as so large a proportion of our force being required to carry on the siege with vigour," &c. In reply to that, and founding myself on lord Chatham's view of the subject, which, upon the information he was then in possession of, I conceived did not lead him to consider the ulterior operations as hopeless, I expressed his Majesty's satisfaction that this impediment to the prosecution of the ulterior operations was removed by the fall of Flushing.—[Paragraph in the earl of Chatham's letter to lord viscount Castlereagh, dated

16th August 1809, read, beginning "I may now congratulate your lordship," ending "absolutely necessary."]

Is your lordship then to be understood as expressing an opinion, that at that time you considered the capture of Antwerp as probable?—I did not consider myself, at that time, in any degree in a situation to form a judgment upon that question.

Does your lordship mean then to be understood as saying, that you had no opinion upon that point at that time?—I certainly mean to be understood as stating that I had no sufficient grounds to form an opinion.—[Paper No. 44. intitled, "Extracts of Intelligence obtained by a confidential Person," &c. was read.]

The troops there mentioned amount to a considerable number, between 10 and 11,000; was that information given to lord Chatham before he sailed in command of the land forces in that armament?—I apprehend that the information alluded to, was information received by the admiralty. I do not recollect whether it is included in the schedule of information transmitted to lord Chatham from the war department; but I presume that as it was information received by government previous to the sailing of the Expedition, it must have been communicated to lord Chatham.

The largest number of troops mentioned in that information as in any one place, was near Naerden; was your lordship acquainted, at that time, that Naerden was at most but 60 miles from Bergen-op-Zoom?—I was aware that Naerden was in North Holland, about that distance from Bergen-op-Zoom; and I apprehend that the force from Naerden was moved, and subsequently formed the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom.

Was your lordship aware that Amsterdam was about the same distance?—I was aware that Amsterdam was not very remote from Bergen-op-Zoom.

At the time that the armament sailed under the command of lord Chatham, was it your opinion that the most probable way of succeeding against Antwerp was a *coup-de-main*?—I certainly conceived the probability of success against Antwerp not to depend so much upon regular operations, by which I mean a regular siege in form, as by a rapid movement upon Antwerp, with a view of assaulting the place in the first instance, if, according to the information received, the defects of the works and the weakness

of the garrison should admit of such an attack; or, if that should not be found to be the case, by the bombardment of the place, including possibly in the effort, and whilst the bombardment was carrying on, the making a breach in the wall of the town, if the operations could be commenced without regular approaches to the place so near and under cover of the suburbs as to admit of such a breach being made.

As the fall of Flushing was not communicated to your lordship till the 16th of August, and as your lordship's answer to lord Chatham is not dated till the 21st of August, was it your lordship's opinion at that time, that there was any chance of succeeding against Antwerp by a *coup de main*, or what your lordship calls a rapid movement?—That must entirely depend upon the state of the enemy's defences, and upon the force the enemy had been enabled to assemble to oppose the operation.

Was there any account communicated to your lordship of the force supposed to be assembled at Antwerp at that time or in its neighbourhood?—No official report, that I recollect, was made to me, either of the state of the enemy's defences, or of the amount of force that they had been enabled to assemble, but it was generally stated that the enemy were collecting.

That paper which has been read lately, as containing the substance of intelligence collected in June and July, your lordship presumes was communicated to lord Chatham, though you do not exactly recollect having communicated it; did your lordship communicate any other intelligence to lord Chatham, relative to the force of the enemy in those places against which the armament was sent?—I must refer to the information, of which a schedule is contained in a letter of mine to lord Chatham, transmitting certain information relating to the force of the enemy; in addition to the information contained in which schedule, I communicated to lord Chatham from time to time such other information as government were in possession of.

Does your lordship recollect the date of that letter?—I do not, it will appear in the printed papers.

In a paper which is termed "Project of Instruction, No. 1. and 2.," communicated by your lordship to the earl of Chatham in June 1809, there is this passage, "the Expedition must therefore be considered

as not in the first instance assuming any other character than that of a *coup-de-main*, combining with it a powerful diversion against the enemy;" will your lordship explain what your notion of a *coup-de-main* was at the time you wrote that instruction to lord Chatham?—My notion of the operation was, that it was not to be a protracted operation, that it was neither to lead to a campaign nor to a regular siege, but that it was to take all means of accomplishing its object short of protracted operations of the nature I have alluded to.

The Committee is to understand your lordship to give that as your definition of what you supposed a *coup-de-main* to be at that time?—That is what I considered to be the nature of the operation.

Did lord Chatham communicate to your lordship from time to time the intelligence which the general officers of the army received from time to time as to the state of the enemy's force?—No, I do not recollect that any special report was made to me of the intelligence received; I certainly generally understood that the enemy were assembling force upon Antwerp, but to what extent was not reported to me.

Upon what ground did your lordship found your opinion, that Antwerp was pregnable to such an attack as came under your lordship's idea of a *coup-de-main*?—It was founded upon the information government had received, which led me to form an opinion, on communication with those persons with whom I consulted, that the defective state of the works, as reported, combined with the weak state of the enemy's force applicable to the defence of the place, rendered the success of such an operation probable.

Was such an opinion confirmed by any military officers in this country, who were consulted upon that occasion?—I apprehend that the officer entrusted with the command of the Expedition has expressed such an opinion in the evidence given to the House.

Did your lordship receive such an opinion previous to the Expedition taking place?—The opinion to which I refer is given as that which lord Chatham was induced to form previous to the sailing of the Expedition, upon the information then communicated to his lordship.

Was any such opinion, in point of fact, given by any English officer?—I certainly understood that the probability of success (some might place it higher, some

lower) was entertained previous to the Expedition sailing.

What English officer had given that opinion?—I refer to an answer given by lord Chatham, in his examination before the Committee, upon that subject; the opinion of sir D. Dundas, the commander in chief, and that of other officers consulted, is before the House; and I hope the Committee will judge of those opinions, and not call upon me to do so; it is matter of opinion, and not of evidence.

As sir D. Dundas, and the other generals and officers whose opinions were taken, and which opinions have been laid before the Committee, all entertained great doubts of the probability of success, and were extremely apprehensive of the difficulty of the enterprize, did your lordship consult any other, and what military men, upon the probability of success in that enterprize?—I really cannot take upon me to state to the Committee now, the names of all the individual officers with whom I may have had confidential communication upon this subject.

The opinions of the officers before-mentioned are in writing; did your lordship call upon any other officers, and whom, in his Majesty's service, for a written opinion upon the subject of the probability of the success of the enterprize?—I do not recollect that I called on any other officers for a written opinion.

Was the information which sir William Erskine has stated at the bar to have been received with regard to the state of the enemy's force, or any and what portion of it, communicated to your lordship before the 21st of August?—No part of the information obtained by sir W. Erskine in South Beveland was communicated to me before the 21st of August.

Was any communication made from the secretary of state's office for the war department to the lords of the admiralty, desiring a written opinion of their lordships respecting the practicability of a joint operation of the army and navy in the West Scheldt?—The subject was discussed with the admiralty, and the opinion of the admiralty was given upon certain points connected with that operation; which opinion I apprehend has been laid before the Committee.

Was that communication made from the secretary of state's office to the lords of the admiralty in the form of queries, or in what other form?—I do not recollect, as applicable to this particular service,

that any queries were submitted from the secretary of state's office to the admiralty.

Then in what form was the communication made from the secretary of state's office, if not in queries, to the lords of the admiralty, to which they returned the answer mentioned in your last answer but one?—I apprehend that the points to which the opinions apply arose in discussion with the admiralty on the subject of the proposed operation, and that the opinion of the professional lords of the admiralty was taken by the first lord upon those points, and the information communicated to the secretary of state, and to his Majesty's government.

Is the Committee to understand that there exists in the war department, or, at your lordship's resignation of your office, that there did exist in the war department, a paper purporting to be the opinion of the lords commissioners of the admiralty upon some points connected with the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I apprehend that the paper alluded to was an admiralty paper; I certainly was in possession of the paper, but I did not consider it a record of my office.

Was not the paper alluded to, delivered officially to your lordship in your late office, from the lords commissioners of the admiralty?—I certainly did not consider it strictly speaking an official communication, I do not know whether strictly speaking it was an official paper in the admiralty; but whatever character in point of record attached to it, I considered that it obtained by remaining in the admiralty, as a document upon which their proceeding was founded; a copy of it was communicated to me for my private information.

Does your lordship understand this paper remains in the records of the admiralty?—The two papers to which I allude have been laid before the House, one bears date the 9th of June, and the other, I think, the 19th; the only two papers I recollect as applicable to the operation by the West Scheldt are now before the House: there was a paper, which was described as signed by three lords of the admiralty, and which I may have seen in circulation, with the names of three lords attached to it, but I rather imagine that it is the same paper as that which is dated the 9th of June, which professes upon the face of it to be the opinion of the three naval lords; but I think there was

another copy of it, with the names of the lords attached to it.

But in no other respect differing?—In no other respect differing, as I believe; there are circumstances which lead me to imagine that it is the precise paper, but only that one copy had the signatures attached.

Was the paper in question from the lords of the admiralty communicated to lord Chatham?—Both the papers referred to, were communicated by me to lord Chatham.

In lord Chatham's Narrative to the King, there are these paragraphs: "Your Majesty will permit me here to recall to your recollection the change which took place in the original project formed for the attack of Antwerp, and of the French fleet in the West Scheldt, in consequence of the opinions of the general and staff officers to whom this question was referred; and a combined operation of the army and navy, the whole, with the exception of the force to be left for the reduction of Walcheren, to proceed up the West Scheldt, was accordingly determined on. Upon the practicability of such an operation being at once carried into execution, which was however the groundwork of the Expedition, and which alone in the opinion of all persons consulted, seemed to afford any prospect of success even in the most sanguine view of the subject in all other respects; I must confess I entertained great doubts, till the communication of a distinct official opinion given on this point by the lords of the admiralty decided in the affirmative this important question." Will your lordship state whether the paper of the 9th of June, and the other paper to which your lordship has now referred, contain that distinct official opinion of the lords commissioners of the admiralty, referred to in the fourth and fifth paragraphs of lord Chatham's Narrative of his proceedings to the King?—I apprehend that what is referred to by lord Chatham, is a distinct official opinion given by the admiralty of the practicability of carrying the armament up the West Scheldt, landing it, and re-embarking it from Santvliet.

Lord Chatham states, that this opinion of the lords commissioners of the admiralty, which decided his lordship's opinion upon the subject, was given upon the practicability of such an operation being at once carried into execution; does your lordship understand the opinion of the

9th of June to answer this description?—I apprehend, that what lord Chatham means by at once carried into execution, is, that the attack upon Antwerp was to be simultaneous with the attack upon the island of Walcheren and Flushing.

Does your lordship know of any other opinion of the lords commissioners of the admiralty being communicated to lord Chatham, besides those dated the 9th of June and 19th of June?—There was a paper prepared by the board of admiralty with reference to a different description of operation; these papers referred to, are the only two papers that I ever saw, that came from the admiralty, with reference to the conjoint operation by the West Scheldt.

What does your lordship know respecting the other paper to which you have just alluded?—The other paper was a paper connected with an operation which had undergone some discussion, namely, the practicability or expediency of a descent in the neighbourhood of Ostend, with a view to advance across the Continent to Antwerp.

Except these, your lordship knows of no other paper communicated from the admiralty to lord Chatham?—I do not recollect any other.

Did the admiralty communicate directly with lord Chatham upon any occasion, or must all communication in regular official course with lord Chatham proceed through your lordship's office?—Strictly speaking, the admiralty could have no official communication whatever with lord Chatham; but in the course of business it is indispensable for the furtherance of the public service, that a variety of communications and conversations should take place between the several branches of the service, which do not proceed according to the strict official routine of office.

In arranging the plan of this Expedition did your lordship calculate upon its arrival at Santvliet upon any particular day?—On no particular day; I certainly had communication with professional persons, with respect to the period within which it might arrive there under favourable circumstances, but I was aware its actual arrival must depend upon circumstances.

On what day did these communications with professional persons give your lordship reason to think the Expedition might arrive there?—I understood it might arrive there on the third or fourth day from

its departure from the Dowas, under favourable circumstances.

Does your lordship mean that it might arrive on the 3d or 4th day, including the time allowed for buoying the channel?—I certainly so understood it, and I apprehend it has been so stated in evidence to the Committee by professional persons.

Does your lordship include, in the Expedition alluded to in the two last answers, transports as well as ships of war?—I do.

Has your lordship any objection to state, whether the professional persons who held out these expectations to your lordship, belong to the naval or military service?—To the naval.

In the event of its arriving several days later than the time alluded to, would your lordship have thought no probability of success, in the operations against Antwerp, would have remained?—I really do not see how I can answer that question, because it is so perfectly indefinite.

Your lordship has stated, that hopes were held out of the Expedition reaching Santvliet on the 3d or 4th day from its sailing; supposing, by unfavourable circumstances, it had not been able to reach Santvliet before the 10th day, for example, in that case would your lordship have thought there was any probability of success?—Upon the information that government were in possession of, I certainly should not have conceived that that determined the improbability of success.

Suppose it did not arrive till the 14th day at Santvliet, would your lordship have thought its success improbable?—The Committee must feel it is quite impossible for me to state opinions as to what might be its probable success on successive days, which must depend upon the relative force of the enemy, and other circumstances upon which I could have no information sufficiently precise to enable me to form a correct judgment.

Upon the information of which your lordship was in possession, were there any certain limits of time within which your lordship conceived success to be probable?—No limits in point of time, certainly, that I could take upon me to prescribe; I thought the information justified the attempt, and that the result must be decided by a judgment upon the spot, and not by any judgment I could form at a distance.

Was there any one day beyond which, if the arrival of the Expedition at Santvliet had been delayed, your lordship would have looked upon the success against Ant-

werp as hopeless?—That must have entirely depended upon the movements of the enemy.

Upon the information which your lordship possessed respecting the force which the enemy had in different points in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, was there any one day beyond which, if the arrival of the Expedition at Santvliet had been delayed, your lordship would have looked upon the success against Antwerp as hopeless?—I apprehend that if no movements had been made by the enemy, the information would have remained undisturbed; and that in that case the same opinion that was formed previous to the sailing, would have been applicable to any subsequent period.

Did your lordship expect the enemy to make no movement when our Expedition appeared off the Scheldt?—No doubt the enemy would make movements, but what those movements would be I could not presume to judge; it must rest with the observation and the judgment of the officers on the spot to regulate their operations with reference to them.

Did the operation of the British army against Copenhagen come within your lordship's understanding of what is meant by a *coup-de-main*?—Yes, it certainly did; the operation against Copenhagen was undertaken in the expectation of success, arising rather from a vigorous attack by bombardment than by the protracted operations of a regular siege; and so far I certainly considered it as falling within the class of those operations which may be denominated *coup de main*.

Does your lordship remember how many days elapsed between the opening of the British fire against Copenhagen, and the capitulation of the town?—Speaking quite from memory, I think the town was summoned, and the fire opened upon the town, on the 1st of Sept.; I think the town surrendered on the 4th, and the capitulation was signed on the 5th.

Upon whose opinion did your lordship rely as to the possibility of Antwerp being pregnable by a *coup de main*?—I do not feel that I can give any precise answer to that question; it was my duty as well as that of his Majesty's other confidential servants, to collect information with respect to the policy and practicability of the proposed operation; upon that information it was decided that the service should be undertaken; but it is not in my power at present to specify particularly



the nature and extent of the communications, or the whole of the information upon which the government decided.

Did your lordship consider the opinions of those four officers, whose opinions are in writing, as favourable to the practicability of attacking Antwerp by a *coup de main*?—I submit to the Committee, whether I should be called upon to give an opinion on four opinions which are before the Committee, and which vary from each other.

Supposing the opinions of those four officers unfavourable to the success of the Expedition, did your lordship and the cabinet think that the four officers who gave those opinions were in possession of the information which the cabinet had, of the existing situation of the garrison of Antwerp?—If I recollect right, the date of my letter to the Commander in Chief, and his reply, transmitting those opinions, was early in June, I think about the 3d; much of the information, I may say the principal share of the information, describing the weak state of the enemy's force in the Netherlands, in Holland, and in countries adjacent, was received subsequently to the opinions of the officers alluded to; and the information justified a belief, that of the force that was in those districts early in June, a considerable part had been moved to the Danube subsequent to that period; I should wish further to add, that the intelligence of the battle of Asperne was received in this country about the 10th of June, which circumstance had a preponderating influence with his Majesty's government in the consideration of that question.

Were the opinions of those four officers taken for the purpose of informing your lordship and his Majesty's ministers as to the propriety or impropriety of undertaking the Expedition proposed for their consideration?—Those opinions were certainly taken with a view of informing myself and his Majesty's ministers with respect to the practicability and propriety of such an operation; but I perfectly understood, from those opinions and the communications with those officers, that they did not feel they had sufficient information to form a conclusive opinion upon the subject, but that they made such a communication to me as they were enabled to frame, upon the circumstances that they had to judge from.

Did your lordship consider those opinions in themselves and without reference

to any other information whatsoever, which you might have received or the government might have received, as favourable or unfavourable to the undertaking the Expedition?—I really must again submit to the Committee, that they will not press me in evidence to give an opinion upon papers before the Committee, as the opinions differ; some are more encouraging than others.

When did your lordship receive an account of the armistice between France and Austria?—I think I received an account at Deal, when the Expedition was under sailing orders, one or two days before it sailed; just on the point of the sailing of the Expedition.

In the papers now before the House, there is a certain portion of information received by the government of the country previous to the 29th of May, when your lordship wrote to desire the opinion of the Commander in Chief; was that part of the information laid before the Commander in Chief when his opinion was required?—No; no information in detail, and no other information than that general description of the supposed weak state of the enemy's force in that quarter, which appears in my letter of the 29th May.

After receiving the account of the battle of Asperne on the 10th of June, did your lordship require any further opinion from the Commander in Chief, on the question of the Expedition to the Scheldt?—I did not.

Your lordship has stated, to the best of your recollection, the time between the opening fire against Copenhagen and the surrender of the town; does your lordship remember what time elapsed between the debarkation of the troops and the opening the fire against Copenhagen?—If I recollect right, the army began to disembark either the 16th or the 17th of August; I forget the precise distance that the disembarkation took place from the town, but, I believe, a distance of seven or eight miles; I consider that the nature of the equipments with which the army proceeded against Copenhagen, did not admit of so rapid an advance on Copenhagen for the purpose of bombarding the town, as the equipments would have admitted of against Antwerp, inasmuch as the number of artillery horses accompanying the armament against Antwerp was peculiarly large.

On what day did your lordship tender your resignation of the seals of the war

department?—If I recollect right, my resignation was submitted to his Majesty on the 8th of September, but I did not deliver up the seals of office to his Majesty until the 12th of October.

During the intermediate time, between the 8th of September and the 12th of October, did your lordship attend the cabinet, or consider yourself only as holding the seals till your successor was appointed for the purpose of carrying on the business of the office?—Some days subsequently to the 8th of September, I think it might be about the 18th or 19th of the month, understanding that my successor was not immediately prepared to enter upon the department, I represented to his Majesty, that I did not feel myself in a situation to submit to the consideration of his confidential servants any new question of importance, but that I would charge myself with the detail of the business, particularly with the care of the health of the troops during the interval that might elapse; and I think I signified to the chancellor of the exchequer, that in the situation in which I stood, I must decline attending any cabinet to deliberate upon new measures, and particularly any cabinet upon the expediency of evacuating or retaining the island of Walcheren, unless it was for the simple purpose of giving any information in my power upon the matter of deliberation, but that I would attend any cabinet which related to the care of the troops or the carrying on the ordinary detail.

Did your lordship conceive, you could rely upon the information you had of the weak state of Antwerp at or about the time of the sailing of the Expedition?—I certainly did rely upon it, I considered it as information received from persons entitled to confidence.

Since the Expedition, has your lordship received any information from authority, that Antwerp was in a much weaker state than was supposed when the Expedition sailed?—No, I have not; the tendency of the information has been to describe, that the defences of Antwerp, during the period the armament was in the Scheldt, were improved.

Rear Admiral Sir RICHARD STRACHAN, again called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Do you recollect where you were when the intelligence reached you of Bathz be-  
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ing in possession of the British troops?—I really cannot recollect at this moment.

Do you recollect the day or the date when you received that intelligence?—I cannot recollect that, either.

Can you recollect about the time?—I might have informed myself, if I had known the questions about to be put to me; it must have been about the 3d of August.

In your observations on lord Chatham's statement, you remark, that a conversation took place between yourself and lord Chatham on the 1st of Aug., wherein you say, that you attempted to impress upon his lordship's mind the many difficulties that were to be encountered by proceeding by the West Scheldt, and that you inferred from his lordship's answer that he intended to modify his future plans, and to proceed by South Beveland; where did such conversation take place?—At Middleburgh, I am not positive whether after or before dinner, but I think it was before dinner, after having conversed upon the subject, and sir Home Popham having been called in. I considered that if we were not able to get through the Slough passage, the army would advance by South Beveland.

Who was present at the conversation besides Sir Home Popham?—I do not mean to say sir Home Popham was present at the conversation, but sir Home Popham frequently came in: and I do not recollect what other persons, but I think general Brownrigg was there at times, and several other officers of the army; I do not know that gen. Brownrigg was present at the conversation.

Was it conversation at dinner, or in a private room afterwards?—I rather think it was before dinner, I was in lord Chatham's drawing-room; but we conversed upon the subject before dinner and after dinner too, and the conversation arose from the state of the weather and the probably difficulty that there would be of getting into the West Scheldt with the whole armament, which had then, as I conceived, been arranged to go into the East Scheldt, that is, into the Roompot.

Endeavour to recollect who was present at this conversation.—I do not recollect that any person was present at the whole of the conversation, but at parts of the conversation I think several people might have been present; sir Home Popham was consulted about getting through the Veer Gat and the Slough Passage, and I believe also the practicability of getting along  
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South Beveland with the army, and it was part of the original plan; indeed nothing was decided upon without consulting sir Home Popham, at this time, or, generally speaking, at any time of the Expedition, because I conceived, and I believe lord Chatham did too, that sir Home Popham had a more general knowledge than any other person.

What were the circumstances, in lord Chatham's answer in this conversation, which made you believe that his lordship intended to make so material a change in his plan of operations?—I do not recollect any particular answer of lord Chatham's, but he seemed to consider it as arising from necessity.

Do you mean to say lord Chatham acceded to the proposition?—It was not a proposition of mine, but the determination arose, as I conceive, from a conversation upon the necessity of proceeding as rapidly as possible, and conceiving, as the armament was driven into the Roompot, that it was necessary to advance by some other means than the West Scheldt, although it was understood that the shipping should get into the West Scheldt as speedily as possible, with a view of co-operating with the army.

Do you mean to say that there was any actual determination come to, in consequence of that conversation?—I can only say that I issued my orders in consequence of that conversation, and I always thought lord Chatham had done the same.

State what those orders were.—Orders to adm. Otway, the officer commanding under me in the Roompot, because I did not consider myself stationary, to cause the troops of lord Rosslyn's division to be moved into smaller vessels from the large ships of war, that they might proceed into the Veer Gat, ready to be disembarked upon South Beveland.

When were those orders issued?—I will not be positive to dates, but I think the 2d of August; I think I wrote and sent a rough letter to adm. Otway on the 1st of August, but the official order was the 2d of August.

Did you not receive a letter from the quarter-master general, dated the 4th of August, communicating lord Chatham's desire that the transports, with the divisions of lord Rosslyn and lord Huntley, should be passed through the Slough Passage, and anchored off the fort of Rammekins, there to wait your further arrangements for proceeding up the Scheldt?—

I do not recollect such a letter; I do not mean to say I did not receive such a letter, but I doubt very much if such a letter ever reached me.

In consequence of the conversation which passed with lord Chatham on the 1st of Aug., did you at that time report the difficulties that presented themselves in prosecuting the original plan of the Expedition to the lords of the admiralty, and that you had in consequence suggested to the general the expediency of landing the whole armament intended for the ulterior operations on South Beveland from the Slough Passage?—I never made any such report to the admiralty, nor was it a proposition of mine to the general; the arrangement arose from the conversation that took place, upon an idea that we should find difficulty and delay in getting through the Slough Passage, but it was no proposal of mine at that time; I mean it was not a distinct proposal from myself.

Then how came you in your observations to state, that you attempted to impress upon lord Chatham's mind the many difficulties that were to be encountered in proceeding by the West Scheldt?—This arose in the course of conversation; the difficulties in proceeding by the West Scheldt were owing to the weather, which drove us into the Roompot, and diverted us from the direct channel, according to the original plan; and I conceived that we should find great difficulty in getting the whole armament, that is, the naval part of it, through the Veer Gat and the Slough passage, and therefore I believe lord Chatham agreed with me, that it might be advisable, if we found this difficulty, to land the army upon South Beveland (at least so I understood at that time) and proceed along that island to the accomplishment of the ulterior objects.

Can you recollect the room where this conversation took place?—It was in lord Chatham's drawing-room, he had only one drawing-room, where his lordship received his company after dinner: I beg to observe, that I do not mean to state the precise words that passed; I only understood from his lordship, that if we should find a difficulty in getting through the Slough passage and the Veer Gat, the army should pass up along South Beveland; and to reduce the number of transports necessary to pass through the Veer Gat and Slough passage, a great part of it was to be landed upon that island.

In consequence of this conversation, had you, or any one acting immediately under you, any communication with the quartermaster-general or the adjutant general, respecting the change of plan?—No, I had not, nor do I think it was suited to the station I filled, that I should have any communication with them, nor was it necessary I should give orders to those acting under me, to have communication with them; but I did give orders to sir Home Popham to explore the passage of the Veer Gat and Slough passage, and to give all the aid in his power to every wish of the commander in chief of the army, and he was employed constantly upon that service till I sent for him about the 3d of August, I think.

How is the understanding of a co-operation carried on between the two departments of the army and navy, by what conveyance?—As soon as the commanders in chief of the two services have agreed upon any plan of operations, they issue the orders to the department under each respectively; I cannot conceive that the admiral commanding the fleet has any thing to do with any body, but the commander in chief of the army: I did condescend, I must own, to correspond with the quarter-master general, but that was done with a view of preserving harmony.

Did you condescend to correspond with the quartermaster general upon this occasion?—No, I did not think it necessary.

In your observations, you mention that it had been at one time proposed, before you quitted London, to land the whole army in Tolen and South Beveland, as presenting fewer difficulties than the navigation of the West Scheldt; by whom is the Committee to understand that such a plan was suggested, and were you present at any of the discussions that arose out of it?—The plan was suggested in some of the memoirs at that time laid before the intended commanders in chief, but I did not attend any of the discussions, because I was perfectly ignorant of every part of the country, as well as the navigation of the East and West Scheldt; but I told my lord Chatham, in London, that whatever arrangement was agreed upon by his lordship and the general officers in his confidence, and sir Home Popham, whom I had desired to act as the sea officer upon this occasion, that I might attend my other duties, I should be very

ready to agree to, because I had a full appreciation of sir Home Popham's local knowledge; I knew that he had prepared the best and clearest arrangements for the Expedition, and I thought lord Chatham himself held it in that light; and having understood that sir Home Popham was in lord Chatham's perfect confidence, it eased my mind a good deal, that I could leave him to arrange every thing with the army, while I was attending my naval duties.

In your observations, you remark that another plan had been proposed, of disembarking in the Slough, marching across South Beveland, embarking again at Bathz, and landing at Santvliet, which plan, you say, appeared to be approved by many good judges of military operations; state to the Committee when the plan alluded to was proposed, and with whom it was discussed.—I have understood this was talked of in London, but it was revived again in the conversation with lord Chatham at Middleburg, on the 1st of August, but there can be no doubt that lord Chatham did not disapprove of this plan; and if his lordship's letter of the 2d of August to me, which I believe is on the table, is read, it will appear that his lordship intended the army should land on South Beveland, and therefore lord Huntley's division was recalled from Cadzand.

Are you aware, in referring to sir John Hope's paper in support of the plan you have mentioned, that it was only written on the 23d of August, and that it does not refer to a landing from the Slough on South Beveland, but applies solely to the actual state of the undisposible force, part of which was afloat and part confined in South Beveland, and had no reference whatever to the march of troops, or the transport of artillery and stores through South Beveland, beyond what was then in the island?—I never saw the paper of sir John Hope, or heard it read, that I recollect.

In your observations, you state that you had no knowledge of any previous arrangement made for a vigorous co-operation by the navy on the town of Flushing, at the time of landing or when troops advanced to invest it; what is the Committee to understand from that passage, in the secret memoranda communicated by you to the principal officers of the fleet, dated the 16th day of July 1809, wherein it is stated, that the bombs, the

moment Cadeand is in our possession, are to move up to above Breskens to the best position for bombarding the town from the East side, which is to be done as early as possible with reference to the disembarking on Zoutland; and in the same paper, in speaking of the mode of attack, which actually took place, it is directed that the bombs are to take the same stations as before, and to be ready to commence the bombardment when actually directed?—This arrangement was made, when it was intended to land in Zoutland Bay, with a view of drawing the attention of the town from the troops landing; but when the stress of weather obliged the armament to go into the Roompot, the bombs and the rest of that kind of flotilla went in with the squadron also, and became necessary to cover the debarkation of the troops in case the enemy had appeared in strength when the landing was made upon Walcheren; and those bombs, as soon as they could be got through the Veer Gat, did actually take their position to bombard and annoy Flushing; but captain Cockburn, who at that time had the command of the flotilla, was desired by lord Chatham, upon no account to fire on the town until the batteries were ready to open at the same time: this I only heard of then, but afterwards, when the frigates passed through on the 11th of August, I desired captain Cockburn to direct the bombs to throw some shells into the town by way of drawing the fire from the frigates, and he told me he would do it, and gave orders accordingly; but he observed, it was contrary to the wishes of lord Chatham; and before any shells could be thrown, general Fraser, who commanded, told me that lord Chatham had given express directions that no firing should commence till the batteries were ready; therefore the frigates passed through, exposed to the fire of Flushing and Cadeand, without a single shot being fired either from the batteries (several of which were ready at the time) or from our own bombs to draw the fire of the enemy from them. I mention this as a proof that lord Chatham could never intend that circumstance of the bombs being ordered to the South-east end of the town, should be mentioned on this occasion, because I apprehend, in his lordship's statement, he meant that ships of the line should go against the town at the time the army was proceeding to invest it; and that is what I meant, in my observa-

tions on lord Chatham's statement, when I explained the circumstance of the ships of the line not being brought against the town.

Do you recollect a drawing, shewing where the bombs were to be placed?—Yes; that was with regard to the actual landing on Walcheren, and not at all with reference to bombarding the town.

How do you explain captain Bolton's letter of the 7th of July to you, (Admiralty papers, No. 1.) wherein he states, if the attack is made with wind southerly, the Wielin channel will be most advisable for the large ships to pass up, as, after passing the Ellebog, those intended to batter Flushing can bear up to their stations, as well as the ships that cover the troops landing above Sonberg; and in another part of which letter, he states, there would be one advantage by attacking with the wind northerly, as the ships damaged in battering Flushing may bear away to reef?—With regard to captain Bolton's letter, this is his statement, in compliance with directions that I gave him; but I was not bound to act up to captain Bolton's suggestions, nor was any plan adopted in consequence of captain Bolton's suggestion; and I do not believe that my lord Chatham, or any general officer in the army, ever heard of captain Bolton's letter, till it appeared upon the table of this House; captain Bolton might have an idea the ships should be brought against Flushing, and therefore, according to the best of his judgment, he stated what would be the best way in his opinion for commencing the operation, but it was never acted upon; and I do not conceive that this letter of captain Bolton's is at all a contradiction of any observations of mine upon lord Chatham's statement, and indeed till this moment I had altogether forgotten this letter of captain Bolton.

As you appear to lay so much stress in your observations, upon the expediency of landing the force destined for the ulterior objects of the Expedition upon South Beveland from the Slough passage, have you taken into your contemplation the difficulties that might have presented themselves in the execution of such a mode of proceeding?—Yes I had, because I very soon perceived that we should experience a great difficulty, with the prevailing winds blowing right through the Slough passage, in getting the transports and smaller vessels through; and to save

time, I then thought that the most rapid way of proceeding, would have been to have landed the army upon South Beveland, and to have re-embarked them in boats and schuyts and smaller vessels proper for the purpose, and landed them on the opposite coast, on the spot originally designed: but I beg to have it understood, that I never repeated this proposition to lord Chatham, nor did I urge the matter with him, because I thought his lordship the best judge what to do with the army; and if it had not been for his lordship's statement of his proceedings, wherein my conduct has been reflected upon, I should never have thought of making the observations which are now before the Committee.

Did you, in the conversation you state yourself to have had with lord Chatham on the 1st of August, represent all the difficulties that presented themselves in the navigation of the Slough passage and West Scheldt; and if so, what were those difficulties, and were they foreseen previous to your leaving England?—I did not represent any difficulties, because I did not know them to a certainty; but I supposed we should experience difficulties, and the wind and weather formed a great obstacle to the vessels getting through the Slough passage: when we left England, it was not in the contemplation of government that we should take the route through the Slough.

Did not you on the 2d of August express to lord Chatham, that the battery of Borslan should be taken, whereby a communication from the Veere channel would be opened to the Western Scheldt?—I wrote to lord Chatham, I do not recollect now what the date of the letter was, but it must have been about that time, asking his lordship whether this battery was taken, that I might know, in case it was taken, what directions to give to the commanding officers of the ships coming into the Scheldt were to anchor, having doubts if the battery was not taken whether there would be sufficient room for them to lie clear of it; I do not recollect the date of my letter, nor have I a copy of it, but lord Chatham informed me in reply, that all the batteries of South Beveland had been taken by sir John Hope, and I think he concluded by saying he did not believe the report of the duke of Dantzic having arrived at Antwerp; but I do not remember even the date of this letter, nor can I pledge myself for the precise words of my letter.

Did you not employ captain Jones, of the Namur, in the superintendence of the navigation of the Slough, and the disembarkation of the troops to be landed there?—Yes, I did.

Were not you satisfied with the professional skill, judgment, and ability of capt. Jones?—I never had any reason to doubt it; I was satisfied.

Do you know the landing place which captain Jones selected as the most favourable, and where he did actually land the infantry and artillery of lord Rosslyn's and lord Huntley's divisions on the 9th of August?—No, I do not; I know nothing about it.

Was every possible exertion used to expedite the transports containing the cavalry and ordnance into and through the Slough passage?—I have every reason to think there was; there was a great delay in getting them through, but I think it rather arose from the intricacy of the navigation, and the wind blowing right through the passage, more than any neglect of the officers commanding; I never in my life saw more zeal or desire to forward a service than was shewn by the officers that I employed; indeed they toiled night and day.

Do you know at what time they actually arrived off the landing-place fixed upon by captain Jones?—No, I know nothing about it, I was otherwise employed; and it is hardly to be expected that the commander in chief of a great Expedition could confine himself to the ferrying over a division of the army; I doubt very much if lord Chatham himself at the time knew the precise spot where those troops were ordered to be landed.

You do not recollect any report being made to you, of those transports arriving at their destination?—There might have been a report made to me, but I do not recollect it; and it is very likely no report was made to me, because the transports were ordered immediately up to Veer, and in a position to land upon South Beveland, and therefore any fresh report was unnecessary.

Supposing the army to have been in readiness at Bathz for a re-embarkation to cross the channel to Santvliet, what arrangements had you made in your mind to pass them over to the continent?—The moment I had understood from lord Chatham that he determined to proceed to lead the army, or to order the army over, I should have ordered every boat and

vessel capable of conveying troops across to proceed immediately to Bathz; and they could have got there, together with the whole of the flotilla, if it was necessary, in good time, that is, in 24 hours, or a day and a half at-most, ready to carry the army over.

At what time was the whole of the flotilla assembled at Bathz?—Not till after the fall of Flushing; and the whole of the flat-boats did not come up to Bathz till the re-embarkation of the troops from Walcheren; but this was no arrangement of mine: and I considered it a very necessary delay, because I would have had the army carried across the ferry, and marched through South Beveland, and the boats sent up immediately to be ready for the army at Bathz; but I did not propose this, not wishing to interfere with matters not connected with myself.

Were you called upon by the admiralty for a Narrative of your proceedings, on your return from the Scheldt?—No, I never was called upon officially for any Narrative; but it was suggested to me, that I might as well have one ready, in case it should be required; at the same time it was signified to me that this was not an official desire. I was preparing a Narrative, and expressed a wish to know what the nature of the Narrative was that lord Chatham was preparing, whether it contained charges against me or not. I never could get information upon this subject, and of course, as I was not officially ordered to prepare my Narrative, I was in no hurry to finish it. I went over to Walcheren, and upon my return, the Narrative still remaining unfinished, and indeed quite in an imperfect state, I was told that now it would not be expected from me, or it might not be required. I never considered at all as an official thing.

Is it in your recollection, when you were advised to prepare a Narrative?—Early in Oct. it was suggested to me that such a thing might be required from me; I was not advised to prepare one. I cannot recollect the precise words of the conversation that passed. I am afraid of asserting any thing positively, lest I should make a mis-statement, but that was the substance.

Who suggested to you the expediency of preparing a Narrative of that sort?—Lord Mulgrave, but not lord Mulgrave by himself; I think Mr. Pole was present at the time.

Did you ever shew the Narrative in the

unfinished state you represent it to have been?—Never to any person except my secretary, who I am sure would not communicate the contents to any one, and only to him since my return to England; nor did I authorize it to be shewn, and I do not believe any person has ever seen it, except the persons who assisted in writing it: none of his Majesty's ministers have ever seen it.

How came you to know that lord Chatham was preparing a Narrative?—I read it in the newspaper; I understood that lord Chatham had given it to the king, from what I read in the newspaper: indeed it was in every body's mouth at that time, when I came home; and my friends, not at all connected with the administration, advised me to be very cautious in wording my Narrative, because it was supposed lord Chatham's contained charges against me.

Who gave you that advice?—It was no person at all connected with the administration, or in any public situation at this moment.

Did you not shew your statement to sir H. Popham?—Yes, because sir H. Popham, who had taken so active a part in the Expedition, was assisting me with his notes in preparing this Narrative, but did not at all interfere with regard to the matters contained in it; that is, I mean he did not influence me as to any thing I meant to assert in it, except correcting the dates, and putting it in that form fit to be presented to his Majesty, as I expected it would have been; but it never was finished; and I do not consider that I have any Narrative; at the same time, if the Committee think a Narrative can give them any fuller information, I shall be very ready to prepare one, if they please to give me time; I am sure that I do not wish to withhold any information whatever from the Committee.

Do you recollect at what time you shewed the Narrative in question to sir H. Popham?—Soon after my return from Walcheren; early in the month of Oct. I communicated to sir H. Popham my wish to prepare a Narrative, and, as he was exceedingly correct with his dates and his notes, and having been in my confidence from the beginning of the Expedition till our return to England, I requested of him to give me his assistance in preparing this Narrative, and he accordingly assisted me in the preparation of it; but from circumstances I after-

wards did not find it necessary to finish it, and sir H. Popham returned the paper into my hands: I have answered this more fully than might be otherwise proper, that the Committee may be in full possession of the circumstances from the beginning to the end.

Do you recollect at what time you received the intimation that you need not proceed to finish your Narrative?—I never received any intimation to that effect, but upon my mentioning something about the Narrative when I returned from Walcheren in Dec. last, I was told that it was not likely to be required now.

Who told you that it was not likely to be required now?—Lord Mulgrave; I cannot answer for the precise words; but I understood the meaning, that it had been so long delayed, or something to that effect, that at this late time it was not wanted.

Do you recollect having addressed a letter, of which the following is a passage, to the officers who had been under your command: "I request you will transmit me a copy of all my letters and orders to you since the 10th of July, as I have been suddenly called upon by the admiralty, to lay before their lordships a Narrative of the proceedings of the fleet which I had the honour to command on the coast of Holland?"—Yes, I do; for although I did not deem the advice to have a Narrative ready official, yet wishing to make a correct statement, I thought proper officially to address the different officers who were placed in responsible situations under my command, desiring that they would make to me correct returns, so that when my Narrative was finished there might not be any contradictions in it; I did not know how soon I should be called upon officially for this Narrative, but I never was taught to expect, either by lord Mulgrave or any other person about the admiralty, that I should be officially required to deliver one in, because it is not the usual practice of the service to deliver in a Narrative of our proceedings.

In your dispatch dated the 11th of August, published in the gazette, it is stated, that the cavalry and ordnance ships were come through the Slough passage; and in the same dispatch of the 11th of August, as laid before this House in the admiralty papers, it is stated, that these cavalry and ordnance ships were coming through the Slough passage, and

had not yet arrived; at what time did you give your correction of this mistake in to the board of Admiralty?—I cannot exactly recollect the day; but it was before the meeting of parliament; lord Mulgrave sent to me and pointed out the difference between my statement and lord Chatham's, with regard to these cavalry and ordnance vessels, and then it was that it first struck me that I might have made a mis-statement, and not wishing to persevere in it, I said I should be very ready to alter it to what it ought to be; I accordingly wrote a letter to the secretary of the admiralty, and stated the letter as I conceived it ought to have been, because I know since that the whole of the ordnance vessels and the transports did not pass through at that time; at this moment I am not sure that some ordnance ships might not have passed through the Slough at the time I stated that the whole had on the 11th of August. And I shall avail myself, with the permission of the Committee, of the opportunity of explaining the circumstance of that letter. There was a general order given, that every thing should be got through the Slough passage as quickly as possible, and on their getting into the West Scheldt they were to go on to Bathz; I had been down at the Rammekins on the 11th of August, and on my return to Middleburgh, the person who acted as my secretary, commissioner Puget, was preparing a letter for England, and among other things, he had put in the paragraph alluded to; I at that time had some doubts, as I had lately come up from Rammekins, whether the cavalry and ordnance ships had got through, although I had observed many ships passing through and going up, and I asked him several questions about it, not wishing to make a misstatement, but conceiving it was the case, from his representation, I allowed it to stand in the letter.

At what time did you address your letter to the secretary of the admiralty, correcting the error in question?—I cannot exactly recollect the date, but it was just before the meeting of parliament.

Did you ever shew your letter of the 27th of August from Bathz, to Sir Home Popham?—If it is meant my official letter, certainly not; nor any letter of that date.

Then you think, sir H. Popham never saw it till he saw it in print?—I am sure



sir H. Popham never saw it; and I believe he did not know of it till he saw it at Middleburg, in a newspaper from England, when we returned down the Scheldt.

By your letter to lord Gardner, dated the 20th of July, you direct him to co-operate with commodore Owen, in landing part of lord Huntley's division of the army on Cadsand; but in your subsequent letter to lord Gardner, dated the 29th of July, you direct him to take a position off West Capelle, keeping the Duerloo open; at what distance from commodore Owen did a compliance with this last order place lord Gardner?—The distance I cannot be certain of, because it was for lord Gardner to place his ships as near to the Droegraen as he prudently could, that he might be near enough, as was expressed in the same order, to assist commodore Owen with his boats; I cannot tell what distance his lordship was off from commodore Owen, but he was directed to place himself in a situation to be ready to assist with his boats, to the best of my recollection.

What number of men do you calculate the boats of a line-of-battle ship would be able to put on shore, under ordinary circumstances of weather?—From 80 to 100, according to the size of the ship and her means with regard to boats; and I concluded, when I gave lord Gardner orders to assist commodore Owen with his boats, that he would have been able to have given the means of landing between 6 and 700 men, according to the state of the weather.

Did lord Chatham, previously to the siege of Flushing, distinctly express to you his expectation, that the navy would batter Flushing in conjunction with the army?—No, he never did; and his lordship appeared to me to be perfectly satisfied with every thing we were doing; and, with myself, attributed our misfortunes to the weather.

Do you remember, while at Deal, sir W. Erskine's communicating to you his opinion, that the attack upon Antwerp would be unsuccessful, with his reasons for it?—Yes, I do.

Do you remember that sir W. Erskine stated, that he formed that opinion in a great measure from personal knowledge of Antwerp?—Yes, and it made a great impression on my mind.

Do you remember whether you communicated that opinion of sir W. Erskine's

to lord Castlereagh?—I think I did some parts, if not the whole of it; but whether it was word for word as sir W. Erskine had told me, I cannot answer for, however, the substance was nearly the same, I think, and recommending it to his lordship's serious consideration: there were also some other matters respecting the Expedition, that I communicated about the same time to lord Castlereagh, and I referred his lordship to sir R. Keats, for his opinion.

Was that communication that you represent to have been made to lord Castlereagh, at Deal, or previously to your leaving London?—It was at Deal, and on the green before Mr. Trounse's, the naval storekeeper's house.

Was it a casual conversation that you had with lord Castlereagh, or did you make any official representation to his lordship upon the subject?—I did not consider it exactly as an official conversation, but I spoke as being much concerned for the fate of the Expedition; and among other things I pointed out the situation that the fleet would be in, if we experienced extremely bad weather; and it was in consequence I think of the conversation which took place about this time, that the going into the Roompot was discussed, but I will not be positive it was so.

Do you recollect sir William Erskine informing you at the same time, that he had not been at Antwerp since the year 1794?—No, I do not recollect particular dates, but sir W. Erskine was extremely positive about what he asserted; I do not know that lord Castlereagh spoke to sir W. Erskine at all.

Do you recollect that lord Castlereagh made any, and what observation upon the communication?—I do not remember that lord Castlereagh made any observation.

Do you recollect that lord Castlereagh mentioned having had any conversations with sir W. Erskine, during the period he was at Deal?—No, I do not; but perhaps his lordship may bring it to my recollection, if he had said any thing about conversations.

Do you recollect the date of this conversation?—It was a few days before the fleet sailed, but I cannot recollect exactly the day, because I did not take any particular notice of the time.

Do you recollect the reasons assigned by sir W. Erskine, why he seemed to be so positive that the Expedition would not

succeed?—I do not recollect any particular reason that he assigned, but the general reasoning upon the unhealthiness of the climate, the strength of Antwerp, and the probability of the enemy having a considerable force before we could be prepared to operate against the place.

Do you recollect sir W. Erskine, in conversation with you, having proposed any more feasible plan of an Expedition against the enemy at that time?—He talked of a great many plans, but I did not pay any attention to them.

Do you recollect a proposition of sir William Erskine to land the army to attempt a march to Paris?—I do not recollect it.

In a letter from you to Mr. Croker, you say, "I understand that lord Chatham last night produced a private note of mine, under date the 27th of August, on the subject of provisions, and other matters, to the House of Commons;" what do you conceive there to be in the contents or in the nature of that note, that makes it more particularly private than the other communications you had with lord Chatham?—Because it was in answer to a note which I had received from lord Chatham, that I conceived to be a private note; I do not consider that any part of my letter, whether it is thought public or private, is at all contradictory when it comes to be compared with my letter of the same date, which was written to the secretary of the admiralty: lord Chatham's note to me was something about detaining the cutter till his dispatches were ready; and, as I have explained before, that the business of refitting was determined, as I conceived, on the day preceding, I rather meant that letter as soothing to his lordship's feelings than of a public nature: and it is not at all contradictory to my public letter of the same date, for I do not in that letter vouch for being certain of doing any thing, though I advised the attempt against Lillo and Liefkenshoeik.

Have you any copy of your letter to captain Bolton, to which that is an answer which was shewn to you in the course of your examination?—I do not think I can furnish one now; but I have no hesitation in saying, that the letter from captain Bolton of the 7th July was in consequence of my directing him to give his opinion upon the subject: but I do not conceive when an officer is called upon for his opinions, they are at all binding upon the commanding officer.

VOL. XV.—*Appendix.*

[The witness was directed to withdraw.  
—The witness was again called in.]

Do you wish to make any correction in any part of your evidence?—It occurs to me, that in one part of my examination I said that I never saw a memorandum of general sir John Hope's of the 23d of August; what I meant by that was, that I had never seen it as a memorandum before this enquiry.

What is your meaning, in the object you express yourself to have had in writing your private letter of the 27th of August, when you say it was done to soothe lord Chatham's feelings?—It appeared to me, as well as to some others of my friends, for instance, sir Richard Keats, that lord Chatham was extremely hurt that circumstances had prevented him from proceeding on to the ulterior objects of the Expedition: I felt for his Lordship, and with this sentiment I wrote the letter; there is no part of that letter which differs from my public letters, except in that particular part, where I say little success can be expected from any operation, I meant against Antwerp, for I had on the day preceding urged very strongly, that an attack should be made upon Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, but I did not at that time state to his lordship or to the generals, that I thought we should be successful in any operations afterwards, so that this observation of mine is no contradiction to my public letter; and upon the reading my public letter I cannot conceive that it ought to have given the least offence to lord Chatham, because it was only a statement of what I myself wished to do.

You have stated, in a former part of your evidence, that you did not consider it official, but were told, that probably it might be as well you should prepare a Narrative; had you any letter upon that subject from any official person?—I was not told that I might prepare a Narrative in those words, and I never had any official letter or letters upon that subject, from any person.

You have stated, that you read in the newspaper, that lord Chatham was preparing a Narrative: was that the only source you had of belief, that lord Chatham was preparing a Narrative?—I heard it in almost every company I went into about that time.

When you were asked respecting the Narrative you had in preparation, I understood you to say, no person had seen it but your secretary; you afterwards stated,

(2 M)

that sir Home Popham had seen it; is sir Home Popham the gentleman to whom you alluded, or did it escape you at that time, that sir Home Popham had seen it?—Sir Home Popham assisted me in the preparation of it. I think I stated that sir Home Popham and my secretary were the only persons who had seen it since. If I have made a contradictory statement, I did not mean to do it.

You have stated, you had a conversation with sir William Erskine, on the taking of Antwerp, which made a great impression on your mind; had you at that time or since, any reason to doubt the accuracy of sir W. Erskine's judgment in that respect?—No, I have not; the conversation was about the Expedition generally, and that it was too late in the year, that the sickly season would come on; and every thing that sir W. Erskine predicted has turned out correct.

Did sir William Erskine profess to have any recent knowledge of Antwerp, or did he speak from a recollection of the state of its defences in the year 1794?—I cannot recollect any date, but it was some time ago he spoke of, when he was there himself, which I suppose might have been about the year 1794.

When he spoke of the unhealthiness of the operation, did you understand him to refer to operations in the neighbourhood of Antwerp as to be carried on in an unhealthy country?—He spoke of the sickly season coming on, and that before we should have any ulterior success the army would be very sickly, and that its operations would be cramped on that account.

Did sir William Erskine represent that the army would be exposed to extraordinary sickness, operating in the neighbourhood of Antwerp?—No, I do not understand that he did.

Did sir William Erskine profess to have any knowledge or information of the then state of the enemy's force at Antwerp, or in the countries adjacent?—I do not recollect that he did; I think, to the best of my recollection, he did say something about the enemy's force, but the particulars I will not venture to repeat. [The witness was directed to withdraw.

*"London, 14th March 1810.*

"Sir; In considering the whole of the evidence which I had the honour to deliver last night in the House of Commons, I made use of an expression, from the close pressure of questions which were put to me, that may be open to constructions

very foreign to my meaning: I allude, sir, to an answer which I gave to a question on the subject of communication between the two services, and, I believe, I said that those communications ought to be carried on by the commanders in chief, though I *condescended* to correspond with the quarter-master-general. It is impossible, sir, for any person to have a higher respect for general Brownrigg than I have; and therefore I hope the Committee will allow that expression to be expunged, or this explanation to be entered on its Minutes; for my real intention was to show that I did not scrupulously attend to mere matters of form or rank, when the public service was at all likely to be benefitted or forwarded by yielding to either.

"I have, &c. R. J. STRACHAN."

*"Right Honble. Sir John Anstruther,  
Bt. Chairman, &c. &c."*

Lieutenant General Don called in;—Examined by the Committee.

During your command in Walcheren, did you use your best endeavours to procure information, and particularly from the neighbourhood of Antwerp?—Yes, I did.

What was the substance of that information, with respect to the impression that was entertained by the enemy of the probability of success on the part of the British armament, if it had arrived early in August at Santvliet?—I saw persons that had been at Antwerp, who informed me, that if our army had arrived during the first week in August at Santvliet, and had pushed on to Lillo and to Antwerp, and that our fleet with a part of the army had forced a passage between Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, and attacked the town on the river side, it was thought the Expedition would have been successful.

Did you understand from that information, that the enemy had made any addition or extensive repairs to the works of Antwerp, previous to the arrival of the British Expedition in the Scheldt?—I do not recollect that I received any such information; the object that I had in view was to obtain information of the actual state of Antwerp, and the army in its neighbourhood; and that which I have stated in my answer to the former question came out more in conversation than in any other way.

Did you understand that the impression was that of great alarm on the part of the inhabitants of Antwerp, on the first arrival of the Expedition to the Scheldt?—Yes, it

was mentioned that the alarm was very great; I recollect also that the alarm was very great, on account of the expectation of our fleet; the British navy struck them with very great terror. [The witness was directed to withdraw.]

PETER PUGET, Esq. Captain in his Majesty's Navy, again called in;—Examined By the Committee.

What was the general result of the information you received, when on service, with respect to the probability of success, if the armament had arrived in the first week in August at Santvliet?—I heard from some respectable inhabitants of Flushing, that the works were not in that state of defence which the importance of such a place to the enemy would require.

Do you conceive that if the armament had been enabled to push on at once to Santvliet, there would have been every probability of its success?—I certainly understood so from them.

Were they persons of such respectability and local knowledge, as led you to place confidence in the information you received from them?—Certainly they were.

Were they military persons?—No, they were not.

Do you conceive them to be persons, from their habits of life, capable of forming an opinion upon the military strength of Antwerp?—Yes, I think one so certainly.

Did you understand from the persons with whom you conferred, that the French had directed their efforts to the improvement of the works of Antwerp, subsequent to their taking possession of that town and establishing a naval arsenal in it?—The only information I received was on the point I have already answered.

At what period had the persons from whom you received the information, seen the works of Antwerp?—I cannot immediately answer that question; they told me they had frequent intercourse with Antwerp, and I rather suspect they answered from their own knowledge.

Did those persons give you any account of the state of the citadel of Antwerp?—No, they did not; I merely asked respecting Antwerp.

Did you ask any questions with respect to the difficulties of the country through which the army must pass to Antwerp?—I did not; the persons mentioned to me, that if the army had passed up, they suspected at that time they would have been successful.

Did those persons state to you, that they thought it probable the army could have passed up to Antwerp?—They said, they thought they would have been successful had they passed up.

By passing up to Antwerp, did not you understand them to mean, by the army pushing up the Scheldt, and making the debarkation at Santvliet?—Pushing up the Scheldt, but I do not recollect that Santvliet was mentioned.

Did those persons give you any accurate information with regard to the strength of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik or the fort called the Tête de Flandre?—I have already said it was confined entirely to Antwerp.

Are you aware how sir H. Popham was employed on the 3d of Aug. and whether he saw sir R. Strachan on that day?—To the best of my recollection he did; I was in the situation of confidential secretary to sir R. Strachan, and either on the 2d, 3d or 4th, I had occasion to write a letter officially to sir H. Popham from sir R. Strachan, I think it was respecting commodore Owen writing about the difficulty of the pilots taking the ships up the Duerloo, and in the hurry of the service going on, sir R. Strachan desired me to write a letter to sir H. Popham off Rammekins, desiring him to come down off the Venerable; I was on board the Venerable at that time, carrying on the necessary details of the fleet; the service was extremely difficult, and occupied our whole attention; I cannot confine myself to the 2d, 3d or 4th, but it was on one of those days.

Is that the letter?—[showing it to the witness]—This is the letter which I wrote by desire of sir R. Strachan; his signature is to it; it is in my hand-writing.—[The letter was delivered in, and read.]

"My dear sir Home; It is of the utmost importance that I should see you without delay; leave the command of the flotilla with the next senior officer, and meet me at Veere: I have received dispatches from Owen, on which I wish to have some communication with you.—Believe me to be, &c. RD. J. STRACHAN.

"Venerable, off the Veere Gat, August 3d.

"I enclose two letters.—P. P."

You think sir H. Popham saw the admiral on that day?—I am convinced he saw the admiral on that day, in consequence of that letter.

You have spoken of the parties from whom you received your information, saying that if the army could have pushed

up to Antwerp they would have been successful; state whether you imagine that those parties supposed the army landing at Santvliet and pushing up to Antwerp, meant one and the same thing?—I cannot say any thing about Santvliet, it was merely confined to Antwerp; the information I received was from persons of high respectability, and they merely mentioned that circumstance in the course of conversation.

Did you understand from the persons alluded to, that they founded their expectations of our success on the insufficiency of the works of Antwerp, or the disposition or fears of the garrison?—They mentioned that the garrison was not of that force to resist the army that went out, that it was composed of revenue officers, of burghers, and conscripts, chiefly with very few regular troops.

Is the Committee to understand, they did not reckon on any insufficiency in the works of Antwerp?—I merely received the information I have already stated to the Committee, that the works were not in that state of defence which the importance of such a place would seem to require; that was all the information I got from them.

Did those persons reckon on our success from the advance of the army, without the navy also getting up the Scheldt?—I believe, certainly not; it would require a co-operative naval force.

Do you remember preparing a letter of the 11th of Aug., and stating to sir R. Strachan, when you were preparing that letter, that you understood the cavalry and artillery ships to have passed through the Slough into the West Scheldt?—Yes, I do; I was at Middleburgh, and whilst preparing that letter, some person (who I do not recollect) mentioned that the cavalry ships and ordnance ships were passed through the Slough; I communicated that information to sir R. Strachan, as part of my duty to him in the situation I held; he had his doubts about mentioning it, but I persuaded him at the time to insert it in the letter, according to the information I had received.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Major General MACLEOD, called in, and examined by the Committee.

Were you commanding officer of the artillery employed on the late Expedition, under the command of the earl of Chatham?—I was,

Would it have been your duty, in that situation, upon the arrival of the army at Santvliet, to have taken the necessary measures for advancing the heavy ordnance and stores to Antwerp, for the attack of that place?—It would.

Supposing the army to have arrived, and to have landed successively in divisions at Santvliet, on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of August; within what time do you calculate the necessary means for the bombardment of the town could have been brought up, so as to admit of fire being opened upon the place; assuming the batteries to have been previously constructed by the engineers?—There is one necessary thing to assume before-hand, the landing of the artillery, which must have been done by the navy; that being done, I think I could answer for it, that in five days I could have taken the battery intended for the bombardment of the town of Antwerp; that is, that having landed on the 4th, supposing the navy capable of landing the artillery, I could have had the 30 pieces of bombarding artillery in the batteries, to open on the morning of the 10th, that they would have arrived on the evening of the 8th or the morning of the 9th.

Do you conceive that the fire upon the town from the 30 pieces of bombarding artillery you have alluded to, might have been materially assisted by the use of rockets?—I have seen rockets of great use; my opinion is, that rockets would most undoubtedly have assisted.

Supposing the bombardment could have been commenced on the 9th or 10th, with the means you have described, do you consider that they would have been adequate effectually to destroy the town, if it did not surrender?—I cannot speak to time, but I most undoubtedly do think so.

Are you of opinion that if the town of Antwerp had been destroyed by the bombardment, it is to be presumed the arsenal and the ships building on the slips would have been involved in that destruction?—I cannot exactly speak to that point, because I do not know the situation of the arsenal; but I will answer for it the town would have been on fire, and probably the flames would have extended to every thing that was combustible.

Supposing the flanking fire from the place had been found to be inconsiderable, and that under cover of the suburbs or other protection a lodgment might have been made close to the place without the

necessity of regular approaches, had you the means under such favourable circumstances to erect a breaching battery against the wall?—The erection of the battery would have depended upon the engineers; I had the means only of bringing up breaching guns, in proportion to the quantity of heavy mortars I had before premised, I could bring up; it is understood I had only the means of bringing up a certain quantity.

Had not you the guns to substitute in the place of the mortars, if that species of attack had been found more applicable to the reduction of the place?—I had; but I had a promise from the navy of a supply of every proportion of guns that was necessary.

Exclusive of any aid from the navy, had not you 12 24 pounders on travelling carriages?—I had.

Supposing the town of Antwerp in our possession, are you of opinion that means might have been devised for destroying the arsenal and ships building, notwithstanding opposition from the citadel?—I can only speak to it as matter of opinion, that under the shelter of a town, cover can certainly be expected to do a great deal of mischief; I do not know the situation of the places, but I should rather suppose under such cover great mischief might be done.

Supposing the enemy's force in the citadel not to exceed 2,000 men, and the British army to be masters of the right bank of the Scheldt on both sides of the citadel, is it not possible that mortar batteries, under the cover of the houses, quays, dykes, or other protecting features, might have been erected within proper range against the enemy's fleet anchored off the citadel?—I cannot exactly speak to that point, because I do not know how far the forces out of the citadel might affect the general in command of the army; but I do suppose that under the dykes of this river, many situations may be found to incommode and inconvenience many things in the river.

Assuming the force of the enemy not to interfere with the operations of the army in this respect, do you see any difficulty in such a mode of attack being adopted?—There is no difficulty in the mode of attack; but as to the situation, I cannot speak to it, because I do not know it.

Were you acquainted at all with the force of the enemy upon the 5th or the 10th of August at Antwerp?—I was not.

Were you thoroughly apprized of the obstacles the enemy might interpose to the advance of your artillery towards Antwerp on the 5th or the 10th of August?—I gave my opinion on the supposition of the weather being favourable, and no interruption to the progress and to the arrival at Antwerp, and the roads being good.

Were you exactly informed how the citadel of Antwerp is enabled, or how far its fire can command the town, or that which is called the naval arsenal, where the ships and naval stores are lodged?—I believe I answered, that I did not know the situation of the naval arsenal.

Have you a statement of the artillery captured on South Beveland?—I have.

Did the nature of the artillery so captured, correspond at all with that considered proper for and provided for the ulterior objects of the Expedition?—It did not.—[The Witness delivered in a return of the ordnance found on South Beveland, and also a return of that embarked for the Expedition.]

Upon what kind of carriages were the twenty-four pounders taken in South Beveland mounted?—They were mounted upon carriages to fire *en barbet*.

Why would not the mortars and howitzers captured in the island of South-Beveland answer the purposes of the ulterior objects of the expedition?—As far as the eight-inch howitzers went they would answer, because the English calibre would answer for ammunition for them; the others, the English calibre would not answer for, as there was not a proportion of ammunition to accompany them that would answer to the English calibre; there were some twelve-inch mortars, of which we had none, but there was not a sufficient proportion of shells; and there were six-inch howitzers, we had no such thing; and there was not a sufficient proportion of shells to carry forward.

Is the Committee to understand that the twenty-four-pounders taken in South Beveland were not on travelling carriages?—They were upon travelling carriages with brackets placed under the carriage itself upon the axle, so as to admit of the gun firing over the barbet battery, by which means they were raised eighteen inches higher than they would have been if they had been on travelling carriages; upon the trail of the carriage they had a piece of wood, and a wheel in order to traverse them to the same height.

Would it have been practicable with the means you possessed to have moved the train of heavy ordnance destined for the ulterior operation from the Slough passage across South Beveland to Bathz, in any reasonable time?—I do not think it would in any reasonable time.

What do you mean by a reasonable time?—I mean by reasonable time, that I could calculate the period for transporting the ordnance and the necessary articles, from the Slough to Bathz, if I could in my own mind ascertain that the roads, made only of the common soil of the country, would admit of successive heavy conveyance in any weather; but I rather think that would be totally impracticable.

What time do you think it would have taken, in fine weather?—I think, with the assistance of five hundred horses and one hundred country waggons, I could have made a dépôt at Bathz in ten days; when I said a reasonable time, I beg it not to be supposed that I meant to say the period, but I wish to say no more than I could possibly perform, because that road I saw.

Were you consulted by his Majesty's government, previously to the sailing of the Expedition, respecting the objects of the Expedition?—I never was.

Were you consulted by my lord Chatham, previously to the sailing of the Expedition, respecting the practicability and the expediency of attacking Antwerp?—I never was.

You state, that if Antwerp had been bombarded, you could have transported thirty mortars; how many horses would have been necessary for that service, including with the mortars the ammunition, the beds of the mortars, and all that would have been necessary to have accompanied them?—I had a thousand horses for that duty, and I concluded, with the proportion I could have borrowed from the light artillery, I could have transported in the time I have mentioned the thirty pieces I have stated, provided the roads had been good and no interruption had taken place; I cannot speak from the local situation, because I never saw the roads to Antwerp.

Had you one thousand horses, exclusive of the commissariat horses?—I had.

Exclusive also of the light artillery horses?—Yes.

Can you state what number of horses would have been requisite to have carried the platform, the fascines, the gabions,

and all the stores necessary for the engineers to construct the batteries for the approaches, previous to placing the mortars?—I cannot; but in order not to impose upon this Committee, I did include the platforms in my calculation, though not in my department, because I knew the ordnance could be of no use without them.

Do you not imagine it would have taken a much longer space to have opened fire, if all that belonged to the engineers department was taken into the account?—Not if the engineer's department had been provided for from the resources of the country; I had made no provision for it myself.

Are you acquainted with the situation of Bathz?—I am.

Do you know whether by opening the dykes, the country round Bathz could not have been inundated by one tide?—I do not know, but I should conclude the opening of any dyke in that country would have inundated the whole; there are marks of inundation all through it, and I conclude the dykes being raised for the purpose, any breach in them would have inundated the country.

Are you acquainted with the strength of Lillo or Liefkenshoeik?—Not at all.

Are you acquainted with the strength of Antwerp?—Not at all.

Are you acquainted with the citadel of Antwerp?—Not at all, but by history.

You have stated, that it might be possible by means of the dykes and other facilities to destroy the shipping by bombardment, although under the protection of the citadel; do you think that would have been possible if the enemy were in force on the left bank of the river?—I cannot say; I do not think I spoke positively to that, I think I said that there might be a possibility to find situations in which you could distress or destroy the shipping, but I do not think I said you could destroy the shipping.

Would not the probability of the success of such an operation be extremely diminished, from the circumstance of the opposite bank of the river being in possession of the enemy?—It would be an additional impediment certainly; I have not spoken from local knowledge, that would be another obstacle in the way; I was asked for a possibility, and no one can doubt the possibility.

Do you think that there could be any certainty of the town of Antwerp surrendering to a bombardment?—That is a

question upon which I can give no opinion.

Would you conceive that the commanding officer would do his duty, if ordered to defend that important place to the last extremity, if he did surrender it to a mere bombardment?—I really do not know how I can answer that point; no officer who is directed to defend a place to the last extremity, could ever surrender it upon any terms whatever.

Do you conceive that an officer, who was directed to defend a place as long as it was possibly defensible, would be justified in surrendering such a place as Antwerp to a mere bombardment, particularly with a communication open to the other bank of the river?—If it depended upon the officer himself, certainly not; if the inhabitants out-numbered the garrison, they might overawe them.

Would not the influence of the inhabitants be greatly diminished, by the circumstance of the citadel commanding the town, and by the other circumstance of the egress from that town being open to them across the river?—I cannot tell; the inhabitants might leave the town by that means.

In short, you could not speak with any confidence of the certainty of reducing the town of Antwerp by a bombardment?—I only speak to the destruction.

Were you ever at Antwerp?—I never was.

Were not the particular operations entrusted to you upon the sailing of the Expedition exclusively directed to Antwerp?—The operation that I understood, was the destruction of the French fleet; and in case the destruction of the French fleet could not be accomplished without the town of Antwerp, to overawe the town of Antwerp by a bombardment, in case the fleet went above Antwerp to overawe the garrison of Antwerp or the inhabitants of Antwerp, so as to attain the object.

Had you any written instructions?—I had none.

Had you any particular information with respect to the supposed state of Antwerp, at the time you might expect to be there, either as to the state of its defences or the number of its garrison?—I had no particular information.

Had you any information given to you of the beach at Santvliet?—I have none.

Had you any information given to you of the state of the roads from Santvliet, till you got into the high road from Berge-op-Zoom to Antwerp?—None.

Had you, with any of his Majesty's ministers, or lord Chatham, any consultation as to the mode of approaching towards Antwerp?—None.

When you speak of opening fire against Antwerp on the sixth day from the time of your being landed at Santvliet, do you include in that the time necessary for erecting the batteries from which to open a fire?—I conclude that would have been done before the arrival of the artillery; I conceived the batteries would have been going on all the while.

The whole of the opinion you give, proceeds on the supposition, that there was no enemy to interrupt the progress of the artillery from Santvliet to Antwerp, or the necessary operations in constructing the batteries?—I understood the question to be put to me upon those terms, and I answered it accordingly.

Then in point of fact, you had a train of artillery confided to you to operate against Antwerp, without any instructions or any information either as to the state of Antwerp, its defences or garrison, or any force the enemy might have in the neighbourhood?—I fancy that is the case of every commanding officer of artillery; I do not believe the commander in chief is obliged to give him any information, any further than he pleases.

Did you collect any information upon those subjects while you were at Bathz?—I was not at Bathz till information was needless, for the Expedition was over; I got there on the 24th.

In assuming that no interruption was opposed by the enemy to the advance of the artillery, do you not mean to assume that the British army was superior to the enemy in the field, and consequently in a situation to protect the advance of the artillery?—My answer of course was built upon it.

Are you of opinion that the garrison the enemy might have in the town of Antwerp, provided it was not capable of meeting the British army in the field, would have had the means of opposing any obstacle to the advance of the artillery to Antwerp in the time you have stated?—The garrison at Antwerp certainly could not; but it was the general's opinion, not mine, upon that subject.

You have stated, that you saw the road from the Slough to Bathz, and you have stated likewise, that you think it would have employed you ten days with 500 horses to transport the artillery from the



Slough to Bathz; state the distance between the Slough and Bathz?—It is, stated, I believe, at 35 miles.

If you had employed the 1,000 horses you had with you, instead of 500, in what space of time could you have transported the artillery from Slough to Bathz?—I meant to employ my 1,000 horses, and 500 in addition.

You suppose the road from Santvliet to Antwerp to have been a very different road from the road from the Slough to Bathz?—I have made no calculation of that road; my answers are founded upon the supposition that it is a very good road, that there is no interruption to the progress, and that nothing interferes; I take it exactly as you calculate a time-piece where there is no friction, I take into the account no impediment whatever; those were the data I set out upon, that I was to meet with no interruption, that the weather was good, the roads good, and every thing favourable.

With all the exertion you could make, you could not pass the artillery from the Slough to Bathz in less than ten days?—The question put to me is a very different one from marching from Santvliet to Antwerp, because it would be necessary for me to transport a certain dépôt of ammunition to Bathz, considering the difference of the line of operation, and 55 miles instead of 20 miles, besides an arm of the sea to pass.

Are you not of opinion that the difficulties of the road and the passage increase in proportion as you advance towards an enemy?—I believe, in the answers I have made, I have put the enemy out of the question; I have put all obstacles out of the question.

Do not all obstacles increase in proportion as you lengthen your line of march?—It is for that reason I should have established a dépôt.

Are your opinions formed on the supposition that the town of Antwerp, as well as the citadel, was regularly fortified?—I do not recollect that the attack of the town of Antwerp has been at all a question.

Did you calculate upon Antwerp being regularly fortified?—In respect to the bombardment, I knew there were fortifications; I knew it was not a very regular fortification, but I calculated upon a fortified town.

At what distance from the town did you suppose the large mortar battery to be raised for the purpose of an effectual bom-

bardment?—I should conceive, unless there were some very peculiar circumstances, a battery might be raised at 800 yards distance.

Do you suppose that you could have raised your first batteries within range of the guns on the principal works of the place?—That is a question for the engineers; but I conclude of course, that in no fortified place you could raise your batteries, without being within range of the guns.

What weight of guns do you suppose to be used upon the principal works of such a place as Antwerp?—I conclude the largest guns would be 24-pounders.

Must not the nearness of the battery for bombardment depend upon the nature of the ground in front of the works?—I conceive very much so; I conceive, that under cover of the ground you may approach very near a place.

Is the Committee to understand, that unless there are some local circumstances of ground that admit of a nearer approach, it is the range of the guns that would direct you first opening trenches or raising batteries?—That is a question for the engineers.

Do you suppose, that in case of extremity, a judicious French officer would not destroy any suburb that covered the approaches to Antwerp?—If he had time, most undoubtedly.

Would it be very easy, in such a case of extremity, so effectually to destroy a suburb that it would not still afford considerable covering for an attacking army, more especially if the suburb consisted of stone-buildings?—I can only say, it would be the duty of every officer to take all the advantages he could.

Is it likely such a suburb as that described, could have been destroyed so as not to afford considerable shelter to an attacking army?—There is always an advantage to be had in the ruins of every place that is destroyed.

Were you furnished with any plan of the fortifications of Antwerp?—I was not.

Must not the want of an exact plan of the fortifications of a place, materially retard the operations, in case of a regular siege?—That is a question for the commander of the army.

Do you mean to state, that you were not in the smallest degree surprised that you were not consulted by the commander in chief in regard to the operations against Antwerp, you commanding the artillery?

—I meant to state, that the commander in chief of an army is not obliged to communicate to the commanding officer of artillery every thing that he projects; he was not obliged to tell me that he was going against Antwerp.

Is it not usual to consult the officer commanding the artillery, when a place is to be bombarded?—Certainly, when you come, upon the spot, as to the proper place and the proper position, most undoubtedly.

Was there any other object to consult you upon previously, other than the means that would render the bombardment effectual?—I believe not, that was all I was consulted upon; I was consulted upon taking the description of artillery that would effectually bombard a town, and awe that town into a capture, under the consequences of its destruction.

If those mortar batteries are erected within range of shot, would it not be necessary to make regular approaches previously to their construction?—I should rather think not; you must make a communication with the mortar batteries, but you would do it at night without their knowledge; you might work back again.

Would it not have been necessary, in order effectually to have destroyed a town of the extent of Antwerp, to have constructed more than one battery?—O yes, several.

Would it not have been necessary to have constructed something like a parallel, or to have thrown up some works to have protected the besieging army from the fire of the enemy, so as to have protected those batteries?—If the ground did not afford it, most undoubtedly there must have been protection by work.

Would not those operations, together with the carriage of all the materials necessary, as well for the engineering as the artillery department, have required most probably a great deal more than five days before fire could have been opened?—I speak only of the train artillery.

What was the whole number of the artillery horses accompanying the Expedition?—I do not think I have the return; but I think, I speak from memory pretty exactly, there were 1,000 horses in the bombarding train of artillery, and there were about 500 horses for the five brigades of field artillery, to accompany the troops; and I think there were 160 or 170 horses with the troop of horse artillery, also intended to be attached to the troops.

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Can you state what proportion of those horses were employed in the siege of Flushing and other services in Walcheren?

—There were, I think, about 200 or 250 employed in the siege of Flushing, but I think they were all re-embarked but about 50 or 60; but when I speak, I beg to be understood that all the questions have been put to me upon the supposition of having arrived at Antwerp on such a day, with the horses and all the artillery as they came from England; I suppose the whole of the horses to have arrived as they were embarked from England.

You suppose that five days would be necessary to conduct the artillery from Santvliet to Antwerp, supposing the whole of the horses embarked from England were employed in the service?—I do.

What time do you think would be required for the same service, deducting all the horses which were employed in the siege of Flushing; supposing the two sieges to have been simultaneous?—I never conceived they would have been landed at all; I understood the object was to proceed immediately to the operation against Antwerp, without any landing at all of this part of the troops.

In the supposition that it had been intended to carry on the two operations at the same time with these diminished means, what number of days would have been necessary to have conducted the bombarding train from Santvliet to Antwerp?—There would have been no diminished means for Antwerp, because they were embarked solely and wholly for the business of Antwerp, and never were intended to have gone to Flushing; I mean the troop of horse artillery, the five brigades of field artillery, and the 1,000 horses for the bombarding train.

Were the army intended to proceed to Antwerp provided with scaling ladders?—Yes, they were.

Did not you understand it was arranged that no horses were to be landed at Walcheren, but that the whole of the horses applicable to the service of the artillery were to proceed to the advanced operation against Antwerp?—There were 150 horses, independent of those horses I have mentioned, that embarked at Portsmouth to go to Walcheren.

Is the Committee to understand, that all the horses that you have mentioned, with the exception of the 150 that embarked at Portsmouth, were destined for the service against Antwerp?—Yes.

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There were 200 or 250 landed upon Walcheren?—There were.

Did those form any part of the 1500 horses intended for Antwerp?—Yes, they made part of the Antwerp horses, but were put on board again with the loss of 50 or 60 that were lost.

After what loss of time were they re-embarked, with the loss of the 50 or 60 you have stated?—I think it was about the 18th or 19th of August.

Supposing the armament to have arrived at Santvliet with 1,250, instead of 1,500, how long would it have taken to have conveyed the bombarding artillery from Santvliet to Antwerp?—That is a supposition I cannot well answer, because the calculation I have made is upon the supposition I set out with, that we did arrive with the number of horses; if we had arrived at all we should have arrived with 50 or 60 horses less; but all the horses went together; the whole of the horses arrived at the same period at Antwerp.

Two hundred and fifty is the sixth part of 1,500, if you take away a sixth part of the horses, will not it add a sixth part to the time that is necessary?—No doubt of it.

Were not the 250 horses landed at Walcheren, landed there because the armament was detained in the Slough, and prevented advancing to its ulterior destination?—They were landed because the troops were landed, and the siege of Flushing went on; they were landed to expedite the siege of Flushing.

If the armament had proceeded against Antwerp, would not they have been re-embarked, and sent to the ulterior destination along with the rest of the horses?—Of course.

Could they have been re-embarked before their services could have been dispensed with in the siege of Flushing?—They were landed as auxiliaries to the siege, and of course would have gone with the troops, who were landed under the same circumstances.

And of course could not have been re-embarked till their services could have been dispensed with?—They would have been re-embarked the moment the commander in chief ordered.

Are not the head quarters the natural station for the officer commanding the artillery?—I believe indubitably.

Is it usual for the officer commanding the artillery, to receive written instructions from the general commanding the army to which he is attached?—I believe not; I never heard of it.

As the department of artillery has, in general, more communication with the navy than any other department of the army, state, whether every assistance and co-operation that you either asked or could have expected, was not most cheerfully given by the navy?—I cannot express the assistance and the ability of the officers of the navy that were employed under my command; I did endeavour to do it before they went away, and I trust this public acknowledgment will reach them; I never can repay them.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Colonel FYERS called in;—Examined by the Committee.

Were you chief engineer to the army under the command of the earl of Chatham?—I was.

Would it have been your duty as chief engineer, to have landed at Santvliet, and to have proceeded with the advance of the army to Antwerp, for the purpose of reconnoitering the defences of the town, and of determining, should an immediate assault have been deemed impracticable, how the town could best be attacked?—That would have been my duty if the army had landed and advanced there.

Supposing the army to have arrived and to have landed successively in divisions at Santvliet on the 1st, 2d, and 3d of August, within what time do you calculate that the necessary works for the bombardment of the town could have been completed so as to admit of fire being opened upon the place, assuming a working party to have been furnished by the army of 4,000 men?—That would have depended very much on circumstances; but I am of opinion, that on the evening of the 9th of August the batteries would have been ready and the platform laid for receiving the ordnance.

Upon what number of pieces of ordnance is your calculation framed?—Thirty pieces of ordnance.

Is it your opinion that the fire upon the town might have been materially assisted by Mr. Congreve's rockets?—Certainly they would have contributed very much towards the destruction of the houses.

Supposing the bombardment could have been commenced on the 9th or 10th of Aug., with the means you have described, do you consider that they would have been adequate to the complete destruction of the town if it refused to surrender?—Certainly of a great part of the town; but it depended very much upon the exertions

of the garrison and inhabitants to extinguish the fires; whether the town could have been completely destroyed or not.

Supposing the town of Antwerp to be in our possession; are you of opinion means might have been devised for destroying the arsenal and ships building on slips, notwithstanding opposition from the citadel?—I am not perfectly acquainted with the situation of the docks, arsenal, and slips, but I should conceive, that, was the British army in possession of the town, they could accomplish that object.

As you have said, that if the army had landed at Santvliet on the 1st, 2d, and 3d, by the evening of the 9th they would have been able to have opened their fire upon Antwerp; state why as the army was landed at Walcheren on the 20th of July it was not until the 13th of August they were enabled to open their fire upon Flushing?—I did not myself land on the island of Walcheren until the 31st; at that time I expected that I was to have proceeded with the commander in chief towards Antwerp; I went on board ship again, and returned on the 1st of August, and when I found that my lord Chatham had established his head quarters at Middleburg, I repaired thither to receive his commands; I then immediately went towards Flushing, where I found the army taking up their ground for the investment of that garrison; at that time the advanced pickets of the army were engaged with the French; I at that time met gen. Brown coming away wounded, I had not then an opportunity of reconnoitering Flushing; the next day, the 2d, I did reconnoiter part of Flushing: I reconnoitered also as far as the Dyke of Rammekins on the left, to which the army had not then extended its posts; at my recommendation a post was established upon the Dyke of Rammekins; I reconnoitered Rammekins and pointed out a situation for batteries to be erected against that place; at that time there were barely entrenching tools sufficient for constructing the batteries before Rammekins; the next day a sufficient number of entrenching tools did arrive, and ground was broken under the direction of colonel D'Arcy before Flushing; Veer surrendered I believe on the 1st; it was some time before the transports could get in with the engineers stores and materials to get them landed and conveyed to the engineers park and depot at West Sonberg; I at that time did not take a particular direction either

of the disposition of the tools and materials, or of the minutiae of the siege, as I did not expect to remain any time upon the island, and it was not until the 8th that my lord Chatham put it in orders that I might take the direction of the siege of Flushing; I did not conceive myself at all to be accountable for any thing previous to that time, but after that period I do believe that the operations of the siege advanced as fast as the weather and other circumstances would allow.

Were you consulted before the Expedition sailed by his Majesty's government with respect to the operations intended to be carried on against Antwerp?—No, I was not; I received my orders to take the command of the engineers department I think about the 17th of June, and I think it was the 19th that I gave directions to the different officers of the engineers.

Was any plan of Antwerp given to you?—I could not find any plan of Antwerp in the Tower nor any where; but I did obtain the loan of a plan which was private property; it was a French engraved plan in the year 1781 of Antwerp and its environs as far as Lillo.

What number of horses had you at your command for transporting all the stores that would have been necessary to have raised the batteries against Antwerp?—We never had any horses attached to the department of the engineers in particular, we depended upon the quarter-master-general for the requisite supply of horses.

In the calculation of time you have made, what number of horses did you suppose yourself to have been provided with?—I calculated upon the number of the Dutch waggons, they usually have two horses in each waggon, and I suppose it would require about 200 waggons.

Did you calculate upon those waggons, as supposing them to have been procured and embarked from South Beveland, or to be procured after the arrival of the army at Santvliet?—I depended very much upon the arrangements made by the quarter-master general in that respect.

Are you acquainted with the state of the roads between Santvliet and Antwerp?—No, I am not.

Are you acquainted with the nature of the country?—I never was in that country itself.

Then you cannot state from your own knowledge that the service could have been effected in so short a time as you have supposed?—I calculate upon

the supposition that the roads were good.

Would not the rapidity of these operations have depended in some degree upon the state of the weather?—I apprehend they would, but I have supposed the weather was favourable.

Might it not have been possible the roads might have been broken up or otherwise obstructed, and have you calculated upon any obstruction on the part of the enemy?—No; I have supposed that the army would make good its way, and that the means we had would overcome any obstruction that might be occasioned by injuring the roads.

Has any allowance been made for delay in overcoming any such obstacles in the calculation in which you imagine that you might have opened fire upon the 9th or 10th against Antwerp?—Yes, we carried with us small bridges, and the means of crossing any cuts or ditches that might have been made; we had also fascines and hurdles to make good our way over any swamps or marshes had we encountered them; but I beg leave to observe that the overcoming difficulties of this sort is peculiarly under the superintendence of the quarter master general's department.

Would not the investment of Antwerp have been a necessary preliminary to erecting any mortar batteries?—Yes, I apprehend it would.

Would not some time have been necessary to reconnoitre the works of Antwerp before it could be ascertained where those batteries could be erected with the greatest effect?—Undoubtedly; and I have taken that into the calculation.

Would not the time necessary to complete the investment and the reconnoissance of Antwerp have depended very much upon the force and activity of the garrison?—I suppose in the first instance that the army is competent to drive the enemy into the garrison; that being the case the investment could be a matter of no difficulty, provided the army was in sufficient force to effect that purpose.

Supposing Antwerp was provided with a competent garrison in proportion to its extent, would it not be in the power of that garrison to create considerable obstruction to the earliest operations of the siege?—I have already in my answer to the former question supposed that the garrison is driven in by the besieging army; of course it will be the business

of the besieged to throw every difficulty he can in the way of the besiegers; but I take it for granted that the besieging army is able to establish itself before the place.

Do you imagine you could insure the surrender of the town of Antwerp by a bombardment?—No, I will not answer for that.

Are you acquainted with the extent of the town of Antwerp within the works?—As far as plans apparently accurate can inform me I think I am.

Do you know the situation of the arsenal and the slips where the ships were building?—No, I do not; unless from what I have learned from the evidence delivered in this House.

Are you acquainted with the citadel?—No further, than by the plans and by hearsay; I never was there.

Do you conceive that you were provided with any means to insure the capture of the citadel?—We had all means necessary for it.

Were the means to besiege the citadel included in the calculation of time you have given to the Committee?—No; I made no calculation of the time necessary to besiege either the town or the citadel; I have only calculated when the first battery might have been opened.

Do you apprehend the citadel might have been attacked by a bombardment?—A bombardment might certainly have had its use; but it is not the mode of attack I should have depended entirely upon.

If it had been thought necessary to have besieged the citadel, would it have required a much longer time than has been stated, before batteries could be opened against the citadel?—I suppose that the bombardment of the town of Antwerp might have induced the numerous inhabitants of that very opulent town to submit to his Majesty's arms, and that the submission of the town would have tended very much to facilitate the attack upon the citadel: when the citadel was attacked in the year 1746 by count Claremont, they availed themselves very much of having possession of the town, as one of the approaches was carried along the covered way of the town towards the citadel.

Do you know whether the citadel is casemated?—No, I do not.

In the calculation of time which you have made, how near to the works do you suppose those batteries could have

been erected?—That would have depended very much upon the advantages that presented themselves from buildings or hollow ways or hedges, or covers of some sort, of which we might have availed ourselves in the first instance; but I should have been satisfied if the mortar batteries could have been established within 5 or 600 yards of the town.

Unless much greater advantages had presented themselves than commonly do before a fortress, where every such facility has been removed, as far as the enemy had it in their power to remove them, would not it have required proceeding by regular approaches before you could have erected a battery within 500 yards of the place?—I conceive, that if there were no advantages of the kind I have alluded to, if it was a perfect plain, in the time I have allowed we might have had the batteries prepared at 5 or 600 yards from the place to receive the guns, provided the nature of the soil was favourable to working, and taking into the calculation the strength of the working parties that would have been afforded.

Operating from that distance, and considering the extent of the town, are you certain that it would have been possible to have ascertained the precise situation of the arsenals and the ships building in the slips, and completely to have destroyed them by bombardment?—I conceive that much of that depends upon the situation of the arsenals, with which I was not acquainted; but the batteries of course would have been placed with a view to effect that purpose, and the breadth of the town was not so great as to exceed the range of heavy mortars placed 5 or 600 yards from the walls.

What is the range of a heavy mortar?—The utmost range of a 13-inch mortar would be from 4 to 5,000 yards.

Considering the ignorance in which the army was with respect to the precise situation of the arsenals and the extent of the town, and the difficulty of making nearer approaches; would not a destruction of the ships and the arsenals by bombardment have been of doubtful operation?—It cannot be said, that it would be a sure or certain operation; I should in that situation have depended more upon the submission of the town than upon the chance of a shell destroying the arsenal; but at the same time, it was very probable, from the combustible nature of naval stores, that if not entirely destroyed,

they might have been very much injured by the bombardment and by the rockets.

Supposing the fleet had run up the river under the guns of the citadel, would it not have been very doubtful whether they could be destroyed by a bombardment from the right bank?—That depends so much upon the situation of the citadel and the adjacent country, which I had not then seen, nor had an opportunity of reconnoitring, that I cannot possibly answer that question; I cannot tell without having been on the ground, how near it was practicable to advance the batteries towards the shipping, nor can I tell to what degree the shipping would have been covered or protected by the citadel.

Do you know the situation of Bathz?—I do.

Cannot the country all round Bathz, be inundated to a considerable extent by opening the sea dyke?—No doubt, for the country was inundated all round Bathz, and has since been recovered by dykes from the sea.

Could not Bathz have been surrounded by inundation in the course of one tide, if the sea dyke was cut through?—I doubt whether it would in one tide, but I dare say in a few tides it would.

Had the country been inundated, would it not have been necessary to have approached it by a narrow dyke all the way from Crabhendyke?—Certainly, that would have been the only way of communicating with it.

Under these circumstances, would not the reduction of Bathz have required a considerable time?—No, I do not think Bathz could have resisted any length of time, even under those circumstances, because the dyke on the side of the Scheldt crosses it in such a manner as to afford cover for troops very near to the fort; and I should apprehend in that case, that we should have had the assistance of naval co-operation.

Do you know how far the navigation of the West Scheldt to Santvliet is commanded by the batteries on South Beveland?—I fancy up as far as Waarden.

Can you state whether the armament could have gone up the Scheldt to Santvliet, until our army had been in possession of South Beveland?—I certainly would not have recommended its going up until we had secured the batteries, but those batteries being all open in the rear, must have fallen upon the landing of any small party of troops.

You have said that if the army left Santvliet upon the 3d of Aug. it would reach Antwerp upon the night of the 9th, so as to open fire upon it on the 10th?—I suppose the army to have landed upon the 1st, 2d, and 3d, and the commanding engineer to have gone forward with the 1st division to reconnoitre Antwerp, and that the stores, materials, and tools would have arrived time enough to break ground upon the 6th at night, under every favourable circumstance; that then on the night of the 9th, the batteries would have been ready to receive the ordnance.

By your expression of "under every favourable circumstance," do not you mean good weather, good and unbroken roads, and the enemy incapable of offering any opposition to the approaching army?—I do suppose certainly those favourable circumstances, except that whatever opposition the enemy did offer, was not more than an invading army was equal to overcome.

You mean that the enemy could not offer successful opposition to one division of an invading army, as you state that the army was to proceed in divisions as it landed?—I concluded, whatever opposition the enemy did offer, would not be more than the first division was equal to overcome.

What is the range of Congreve's rockets?—It is really a projectile, the nature of which I am not very conversant with, but I believe the range is very considerable, at least not less than that of a 10 inch mortar; but this I speak with diffidence.

What is the range of a 10 inch mortar?—I suppose from 3 to 4,000 yards.

Is it not true that those rockets cannot be pointed with any accuracy, unless to large objects?—I should apprehend, from their form, that they must be subject to considerable aberration in their flight.

You have stated, that you trusted, in some measure, to the horses and waggons that might have been collected after your landing at Santvliet?—I depended entirely on the quartermaster general's department for that.

Are you acquainted with the state of the works of Antwerp?—No, I am not; I know nothing of Antwerp, except from plans, and from the reports I have heard of the state of the works.

You state, that you believe the plan taken in 1781 was correct?—I believe I said it was apparently accurate.

Do you conceive that Antwerp was liable to be taken by a *coup-de-main*?—If the works are at all as perfect as they were in the plan, I should apprehend they are not to be taken by a *coup-de-main*, unless the garrison should be very insufficient or extremely supine.

If Antwerp had not surrendered to a bombardment, by what means then did you intend to proceed?—There would be no other method, I conceive, but by regular approaches.

Do you conceive that you possessed the means of commencing a regular siege, against a place of the extent and with the fortifications of Antwerp?—As far as depended on the engineer's department, I had.

Do you conceive that there was a sufficient quantity of artillery with the Expedition to carry on the siege of Antwerp, if it had been found necessary?—There certainly was not; there was not a sufficient number of battering guns, although there were some; but I understood that guns from the shipping were to have been conveyed in case the operations had come to that extremity to require regular approaches.

Were there any travelling carriages for the guns that belonged to the shipping?—The ship carriages would have done very well, and the guns and carriages might have been conveyed by sling carriages.

If it had been necessary to proceed in a regular siege do you conceive there would have been any prospect of the place surrendering before a breach had been battered?—No, I do not; nor do I suppose, from my idea of the place, as it appears in the plan, that the place could in that case have surrendered, before batteries had been established upon the glacis which it appears to have, and a passage formed across the wet ditch.

Is the Committee to understand that a breach can hardly be battered, except from the glacis of a place that is regularly fortified?—That is the usual situation for batteries to batter a breach; and where there is a glacis, it is not probable that batteries will be able to see the scarp, except they are put in that situation.

Do you conceive that it would have been safe for the British army under the command of lord Chatham, to have advanced to the siege of Antwerp, leaving Lillo, Liefkenshoeik and Bergen-op-Zoom behind them?—No; I should suppose that it would be necessary to leave a force

sufficient to attack both Lillo and Liefkenshoek; but I conceive that need not be a very great force, as the only mode of approaching them was along the dykes, and the navy would have afforded so considerable auxiliary aid.

Do not you conceive that it would have been necessary also to have masked Bergen-op-Zoom?—Yes, I do.

Do you know whether or not Breda is one of the three principal depôts of the Dutch army?—I should suppose it is.

At what distance do you suppose Breda to be from Antwerp?—About 40 miles, I believe.

Supposing you had established yourself within 5 or 600 yards of the wall of the place, how long would it have required to carry an approach to the edge of the glacis with a view of establishing a breaching battery against the place?—Five nights, I think.

Do you think that the town could have been completely invested, without also investing the citadel?—No, I think it could not.

Have you estimated what force it would take completely to have invested the town and citadel?—I was not called upon for any estimate of that kind.

Can you, from your knowledge of the works estimate the force necessary for that purpose?—I should suppose from 30 to 40,000 men.

Do you consider that the force necessary to invest the Tête de Flandre would be in addition to the 30 or 40,000 men you have stated?—I really am not sufficiently acquainted with the country to answer that question; I never was there.

Have you estimated the time it would take, with a working party of 4,000 men, to carry lines of investment round Antwerp and the citadel?—With that army I do not conceive it was necessary to make lines of circumvallation; I conceive that party would give law to the country.

Do you mean to state that though the investment of Antwerp might have been necessary for a regular siege, it was equally necessary in the case of bombardment?—In the first instance, I did suppose the place might have surrendered without compelling the besiegers to enter into a regular siege, and in that case probably a smaller force might have accomplished the object without investing the place.

If the citadel was not attacked as well

as the town, would not the greater part of the garrison of the citadel be applicable to the defence of the town?—I suppose that the garrison is all the same thing, that if the town surrendered the garrison would retire into the citadel, or at least as many as were necessary for the defence of the citadel.

[The witness was directed to withdraw. —The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

## 18.

*Jovis, 15<sup>o</sup> die Martii, 1810.*

The Right. Hon. Sir JOHN ANSTROTHER,  
Bart. in the Chair.

DANIEL WOODRUFF, Esq. Captain in his Majesty's Navy, called in.—Examined by the Committee.

Were you at the head of the transport department on the late Expedition under the earl of Chatham?—I was.

State to the Committee what the system was that was adopted by your orders for the embarkation of the sick from the island of Walcheren?—After the final determination to evacuate South Beveland, the sick, together with the well of the army, were embarked on board such ships as we had up at Bathz, and in the neighbourhood of that country, and they were embarked immediately under the superintendence of the commander in chief, or such captains and officers as he pleased to direct to superintend the embarkation at different points on South Beveland.

From the pressure of the military circumstances under which South Beveland was evacuated, was it practicable to adopt the same regulations with respect to the convenient embarkation of the troops, either in health or sickness, as was afterwards attended to in the embarkations which took place from the island of Walcheren?—After the fleet retired to Walcheren from the island of South Beveland, there was no regular application from the removal of sick until the 5th or 6th of September; nor was it possible then, from the pressure and the want of transports; and those already come down being ordered immediately to England to furnish other ships immediately.

Were all the sick that were embarked from the island of Walcheren, embarked under the inspection of medical officers,



and was the proportion of transports furnished according to their recommendation and judgment?—They were not embarked in the first instance under the inspection of medical officers, for there were not, I believe, medical officers to attend; for they were obliged to go home with such sick as were embarked from South Beveland; afterwards they always were; I attended with the medical officers frequently myself; and when I could not attend myself, I sent an officer to do it.

From what period were the sick embarked under the inspection of medical officers?—From about the 13th of September; I cannot speak precisely to the day.

Upon the whole, what was the average tonnage per man that was appropriated to the reception of the sick that were removed from the island of Walcheren to England?—In the first instance, when the troops were embarked from South Beveland, it was impossible to ascertain exactly what tonnage we could spare to a man; but afterwards they were generally allowed from two tons to three and a half, according to the nature of the disease, and whether it was a person that could assist himself or a person that required more medical attendance.

Were you employed on service in the Scheldt as an officer of the navy in the year 1794?—I was employed in the Scheldt in the year 1794 as an agent of transports.

Were you at that time at Antwerp?—I was.

Had you any opportunity of examining the defences of Antwerp, and if so, state to the Committee what your observations were, at that time, upon the state of the defences of that town?—I had no great opportunity of visiting the town or its environs; I was extremely busily employed in embarking the sick of the army, and the stores from the commissariat and medical department in the fleet of transports under my command; but from the little observation I made, the works of Antwerp appeared in a very decayed ruinous state; I did not see a single gun mounted any where; I visited the top of the steeple of the citadel for the purpose of viewing the inundation upon the coast of Flanders.

Did you when lately on service in the Scheldt, understand from any information you received, that the works of Antwerp had undergone any material improvement since the French became possessors of that place, and prior to the arrival of the

British Expedition in the Scheldt?—No, I did not.

What opinion were you led to form, from the information you received, as to the probability of an attack upon Antwerp having been successful, if the armament had arrived at Santvliet early in August?—I am hardly prepared to answer that question.

You have stated, that in the early part of September, when the first regular application was made for transports to take sick from Walcheren, there had been so great a demand for transports to remove the sick from South Beveland, that there was not a supply to answer that demand?—Not from the 5th until about the 13th.

Did that supply, that arrived on the 13th, consist of fresh transports, or were they transports that returned after having conveyed the sick in the first instance to England?—They were some fresh transports, and some of the original fleet that I had picked up that had not found me before.

What quantity of tonnage might you have about the 13th?—Not more than from 800 to 1,000 tons probably.

Were they used in the removal of sick immediately?—No.

How soon was it they were used?—I believe there were no sick sent home from my first statement to the commander in chief until about the 7th of October, but I am not perfectly clear as to that date.

Did an increased quantity of transports arrive at Walcheren between the 13th of September and 7th of October, and if so, at what dates?—Between the 13th and 19th of September there were perhaps 40 sail arrived, equal to the carrying at least 3,000 sick home.

Do you mean that on the 19th you had tonnage for 3,000 men including those you had on the 13th, or in addition to them?—On the 15th of Sept. I addressed a letter to the naval commander in chief, and one to col. Offney the assistant quartermaster general, signifying that I had ships for 2,000 sick men; on the 19th I wrote again to signify I had ships equal to carrying 3,000 sick men, independent of two large ships left in reserve by request of the commander in chief for the 23d regiment, or any other casualty that might happen.

Upon the whole, on the 19th, what extent of tonnage had you altogether which would have then enabled you to carry sick to England, and for how many sick

men?—I cannot correctly state the tonnage, but it was between five and six thousand, but the list enclosed to the commander in chief will state that correctly.

Did this increased quantity of tonnage consist of ships, returned from England that had carried sick before?—No part of them were, but there were ships came out properly equipped and supplied with medical comforts expressly for the reception of the sick.

Did any further quantity of transports come out from England, or arrive at Walcheren between the 19th of September and the 7th of October?—Yes; as they arrived they were so reported to the commander in chief.

Can you state to what amount?—On the 30th of September ten additional sail arrived, and were reported on that day.

Do you recollect the tonnage of those ten transports?—No; but they were deemed very ample, at the rate of at least two ton a man.

For what number of men?—I believe it was above 1,000; I am not certain, but my letter will shew that.

Did any more transports come out between the 30th of September and the 7th of October?—There were some more transports came out between the 30th of September and the 11th of October, I cannot precisely say on what day it was.

What number sailed for England on the 11th of October?—I believe none whatever; it was on the 7th of October the commander in chief determined only that he would send the sick to England.

When did they sail?—Between the 10th and the 13th I think, I cannot precisely say; I left Walcheren myself on the 11th of October.

Do you know the reason why this quantity of tonnage of transports was not employed in bringing the sick to England, between the 19th of September, when they were collected at Walcheren, and the time of their actual sailing; was the wind unfavourable, or are you aware of any circumstance to prevent it?—I do not know why; but I believe the commander in chief intended to embark such of the sick as were then in hospitals on board of the ships afloat, to see what effect it would have upon the disease.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Lieut. General the Right Hon. the Earl of ROSSLYN, again called in; Examined by the Committee.

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Has your lordship heard that a plan was in contemplation for disembarking the whole of the cavalry, infantry, and brigade artillery, destined for the ulterior objects of the Expedition, as well as the horses belonging to the heavy ordnance, in the Slough passage on South Beveland, marching them to the eastern end of that island and there re-embarking them for the purpose of landing them upon the continent? I never heard while I was abroad that such plan had been in contemplation.

What obstacles and objections to the execution of such a plan, does your lordship suppose would have presented themselves, if it had been attempted?—I should think the objections to such a plan would have been numerous, and of considerable weight; in the first place, the inconvenience of disembarking all the horses with the certainty of a re-embarkation at the other end of the island, in order to land upon the continent, appears to me to have been in itself a great objection; the only advantage that could suggest itself, as likely to arise from the plan, would have been to save time; and it appears to me that the plan would not have had that effect: In the first place, the landing place at which the infantry of part of my division, and of lord Huntley's division were landed from the Slough Passage, was selected by captain Jones of the Namur, as the best landing-place to be found in the passage, and from every information that I could get, and the most careful examination afterwards by myself, I am satisfied it was well chosen, and the best especially for cavalry; that landing place was very far advanced in the Slough, if I recollect right, nearly from three-fourths to four-fifths of the distance from the anchorage off Veer to the point of South Beveland opposite to the castle of Rammekins, so that a great part of the difficult navigation of the Slough would have been equally to have been encountered if the cavalry and artillery had been landed at that landing-place; and in point of fact the cavalry transports did not arrive off the ferry at the Slough Passage till the 13th of August, the first of them I believe, but the fleet was so large that I cannot speak accurately whether it was the first or the main body, did not arrive off Rammekins till the 14th, and the landing place was between the ferry-house and the point opposite to Rammekins, I should think full a mile and a half from the ordinary ferry: I may perhaps add, that unless the

cavalry could have been landed and have moved forward immediately, I apprehend some inconvenience would have been felt from retaining them long in South Beveland, especially from the want of water.

Does not your lordship think that the cavalry would have suffered in the debarkation on South Beveland in the first instance; and would not the embarkation at the other end of the island have been very difficult for the cavalry, and was not that operation likely to have rendered them less fit for service when they should be landed at Santvliet than they otherwise would have been?—Cavalry are always exposed to suffer in embarkations and disembarkations, and it is therefore highly desirable to avoid an unnecessary repetition of them; and I should certainly have preferred carrying the cavalry up to the point of disembarkation in their ships, to landing and carrying them across the island, subject to re-embark at or near Bathz afterwards.

Was any, and what subsistence issued to the men of your lordship's division prior to their embarkation?—To the men of my division, and I believe to all the troops, subsistence was issued; I should apprehend about the 24th of July for the following month to the 24th of August, and was issued to the men in this country.

In what way was that issue made?—I apprehend for the most part in notes, in some cases such as the paymasters could get for their bills, when drawn upon the coast; in some cases in bank notes; but I believe in few cases or hardly in any specie.

Were those notes negotiable in South Beveland or in Walcheren?—As far as I knew they were not, and great inconvenience was felt in South Beveland (to which alone I can speak) in consequence of the want of money for the troops; and from the representations of that inconvenience lord Chatham was induced to permit a small issue: I should think, upon taking one with another, of about 200*l.* a regiment on account of the subsistence that would have been to have been issued upon the 24th of August, in order to remedy the pressing inconvenience.

In what way was the issue made that was directed by lord Chatham?—In coin. I believe in dollars and ducats; chiefly dollars I should imagine.

Were the men called upon to account for the notes they had received when the

subsequent issue was made by lord Chatham's direction?—I apprehend the notes were in few or no instances paid to the men; but in almost all cases they remained in the hands of the paymaster or the officer, therefore of course they came to account.

Does your lordship recollect, that on landing at Copenhagen all the horses were disembarked in boats?—I was not present at the landing at Copenhagen; at Wedbeck I landed with my division in Coagi bay; some with me were certainly.

It has come to your lordship's knowledge, that they did land in boats in Wedbeck bay?—I believe it; I do not know it; but it may be sufficient to say, that I saw them all embark in boats, and stages made upon boats, in the isle of Rogen.

Does your lordship happen to recollect what was the distance of the place where the guns were landed at Copenhagen to the point where the batteries were opened?—I believe the guns were land at Shoskovod, and I should think the distance from thence to the batteries did not exceed from five to seven miles.

How long did it take to transport the guns from the place where they were landed, to the place where the batteries were opened?—I cannot precisely speak to the time of landing the heavy artillery, but I know the night when the batteries were opened, and I can speak to the time when the troops first landed, and when I arrived with the army.

Have the goodness to state the dates.—The troops landed on the 16th of August, as I believe, for I was not with them; and the bombardment began on the evening of the 2d of September.

What was the nature of that road?—The road was very good.

Was any interruption given by the enemy?—None that I know of to the transport of the guns; there was occasional fire from the gun-boats upon a part of it, but, none that I am aware of to prevent the passage of the guns.

Did any circumstances arise to create delay to the transporting of the guns?—I know of no circumstances to have created any extraordinary delay.

Were any horses employed in transporting those guns from the place of landing to Copenhagen?—I do not know what proportion of horses from the country were employed, but I know a very considerable number were at the disposal of the artillery, if requisite.

Does your lordship remember the number of heavy guns that were taken to Copenhagen?—I think about 50 24-pounders, about 40 mortars, and 10 or 12 howitzers.

Did your lordship hear any complaint of the want of means of transporting those mortars and guns to Copenhagen?—I did not; but any complaint on that subject would not have come to me.

Does your lordship know, whether the country round Bathz, and from thence to Crabbendyke, might not have been inundated?—I have no doubt that a great part of the country between Bathz and Crabbendyke might have been inundated; it is all newly recovered.

Supposing the dykes to have been cut, and the garrison in Bathz determined to resist as long as it was possible; how long does your lordship imagine it would have taken to reduce Bathz?—That is a question that I am not competent to answer, because it infers several previous questions, when and from whence the guns for that service were to be brought, and by what means.

Suppose the dykes had been cut, and the garrison in Bathz determined to resist as long as it was possible, how long does your lordship imagine it would have taken to have reduced Bathz under the circumstances under which sir John Hope appeared before it?—Sir John Hope had with him, as far as I know, only a small proportion of field artillery, and without further means the delay must have been considerable if the resistance was obstinate.

What does your lordship mean by a considerable delay, how many days?—I really am not competent, from not having given to that subject a very particular consideration upon the spot, to give a very satisfactory answer upon it; but I should much doubt whether it could have been reduced with an obstinate defence without further means.

Were there not found upon the batteries of South Beveland heavy artillery sufficient with ammunition for the attack of Bathz, had it been necessary?—Certainly.

Upon the supposition that the dykes had been cut, how soon is it probable that that heavy artillery might have been brought upon Bathz, and in how short a time afterwards might the fort have been reduced?—The transport would have been very difficult along the dyke, but from

Waarden to Bathz perhaps the thing might have been accomplished in five or six days.

Does not the channel of the river lie immediately under the fort of Bathz so as to permit men-of-war and gun-vessels to lie close to the fort, and to batter a breach if it had been thought necessary?—I believe the channel of the river does enable vessels to come near enough to have great effect upon the fort, but the question that was put to me was under the circumstances under which sir John Hope arrived, and at that time there were no vessels or gun-boats in the river; the flotilla did not arrive till the 11th of August, on which day, I believe some flat boats from sir Richard Keats met the flotilla at Bathz through the Bergen-op-Zoom channel.

Was there no road from Waarden to fort Bathz, or horses to be found in the country which could have drawn the heavy artillery, being as I understand mounted on travelling carriages, in less time than six days from the place where they were found to fort Bathz?—The country being supposed to be under water there could be no road but along the dyke, which could not be a hard road; with respect to horses, there were plenty in the country. But those guns were not what I should have called mounted on travelling carriages; in the first place I saw no limbers to them, and I believe the carriages differed from what as far as I know (but I speak without any confident recollection upon the subject) would have been described as travelling carriages.

Your lordship's answer appears to have been given under the impression, that part of South Beveland would have been inundated; but supposing the country not to be inundated, what time would it have taken under those circumstances to have transported the artillery from Waarden to fort Bathz?—My answer was certainly given as required, under the impression that the dykes were cut and the country under water; but there can be no doubt that the transport would be very much facilitated by the road remaining, and the country not under water.

What time, in such case, does your lordship imagine it would have taken to have transported the artillery to Bathz?—I should imagine, collecting horses and carriages, they might have had some guns at Bathz in the course of the second day; the six days mentioned I referred to the whole operation.—[His lordship withdrew.]

Lieut. General Sir JOHN HOPE, again called in; Examined by the Committee.

Did you ever hear that a plan was in contemplation for disembarking the whole of the cavalry, infantry, and brigade artillery, destined for the ulterior objects of the Expedition, as well as all the horses belonging to the heavy ordnance, in the Slough passage on South Beveland, marching them to the eastern end of that island, and there re-embarking them for the purpose of landing them on the continent?—I never heard of any such plan until I learnt that it had been agitated in this house since the commencement of the inquiry.

What obstacles and objections to the execution of such a plan do you suppose would have presented themselves if it had been attempted?—I conceive that the disembarkation of the troops, and the re-embarkation for the purpose of landing upon the continent, together with the movement of the artillery and the stores, must have created very great delay and excessive labour, and occasioned a considerable loss of time.

Do not you think that the disembarking the cavalry and all the ordnance horses, and the moving them across South Beveland to re-embark them at the other extremity of that island for the purpose of landing them at Santvliet, might have been attended with much detriment to those horses, and very great inconvenience?—I conceive it might, certainly.

Are you aware of any more convenient mode of landing the cavalry and the artillery at Santvliet than that proposed in the former question?—I conceive that the disembarkation upon the continent at once, from the vessels in which they were embarked, was a much more convenient mode of proceeding.

In your former evidence you mentioned having seen previous to the sailing of the Expedition a rough draught of the disposition intended for executing the service in the Scheldt; do you recollect whether that rough draught contained any proposal for carrying the principal force of the armament, namely, that part not destined for the service of Walcheren, into the East Scheldt, with a view of its being landed upon Tolen and South Beveland and its proceeding against Antwerp?—I did not.

Did it notice any plan for landing the troops and stores intended for ulterior operations on South Beveland upon the side of the East Scheldt, with a view to

their being marched across that island and re-embarked near Santvliet?—There was no notice whatever in that paper of any intention to disembark upon South Beveland any troops except those to be placed immediately under my command, to wit, the reserve of the army.

Was the rough draught of the disposition alluded to left in your possession?—It was.

Have you ever since retained it in your possession, and it is now in your possession?—It has never been out of my hands, and I have it now in my possession.—[The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

Lieut. General BROWNRIGG, Quartermaster-General of the Forces; called in; Examined by the Committee.

Were you quartermaster-general to the late Expedition under the earl of Chatham?—His Majesty was pleased to permit me to accompany the army in my capacity of quartermaster-general of the forces.

Was it your duty to issue all orders under the direction of the commander in chief, relative to the movements of the army?—It was.

Have you with you the Disposition of the army as settled previously to sailing?—I have.—[The Witness delivered it in, and it was read.]

Was any change made in the Disposition which is now delivered in, and upon what grounds was such change made?—There was a change on the 24th of July; there was a conference held at Deal between sir R. Strachan, capt. sir Home Popham, sir John Hope and myself; at which time the officers of the navy (I mean sir R. Strachan and sir Home Popham) urged very strongly the advantage that would accrue from there being but one place of landing; the original Disposition provided for two; the reasons adduced were principally that there were not a sufficient number of boats to land that extent of force that it was desirable should be landed from both the divisions of the army by one operation. I have a minute of the conference in my hand, which will more clearly state what passed at that time than I can state it now. [The witness delivered it in, and it was read.]

Was lord Chatham present?—No, he was not; that memorandum was laid before lord Chatham, who approved of it; and in consequence a new instruction was prepared for sir Eyre Coote, of which I

have a copy in my hand. [The witness delivered it in, and it was read.]

Did this change, as described in the memorandum now delivered in, make any alteration in the original intention, that the right wing of the army should proceed up the West Scheldt with the least practicable delay to Santvliet?—None, in my lord Chatham's conception or mine.

Supposing the armament destined to act against Antwerp had sailed from the Downs successively in divisions on the 28th, 29th and 30th of July, and that they had arrived at Santvliet, allowing four days for their passage, on the 1st, 2d and 3d of August, when do you consider the advance of the army might have appeared before Antwerp, and when might the place have been assaulted, had a recognizance of the works and garrison justified such species of attack?—I think, if the armament destined to act against Antwerp had been assembled at Santvliet by the 3d of August, which would have been the 7th day after the first division sailed from the Downs, the whole might have been before the place by the 8th; I mean by the whole, that the heavy artillery also might have been there.

Exclusive of the heavy artillery, if the place had been reported in a state to admit of the defences being stormed, when do you conceive that the armament might have been before the place, with the necessary means for storming the place?—I think that if the place had been reported assailable, an exertion might have been made for the troops to have arrived by the 6th at night and that of course the assault would have been immediately made.

When you state that the army might have been before the place on the 8th, with the heavy artillery for a bombardment, is it your opinion that the bombardment could have been commenced on the night of the 8th?—The bombardment might have commenced the moment the mortars could have been placed in their beds.

What period do you allow for erecting the necessary batteries for placing the mortars in, with a view to the bombardment?—I do not conceive that batteries are absolutely necessary for mortars when they are at a considerable range; when they are at the range of 1,000 or 1,200 yards there can be no occasion for a battery, of course care would be taken to have taken advantage of any inequality

of ground or buildings that might have presented themselves in the intermediate space.

Have you been yourself in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, and when?—I was at Antwerp in 1794.

In what military situation were you at the period you were at Antwerp in 1794?—I was deputy quarter-master-general to the British army.

From your recollection of the ground, and particularly of the suburbs of Antwerp, do you conceive operations could have been commenced against the town without the necessity of breaking ground at a distance and proceeding by regular approaches?—There is a very considerable suburb on the road leading to Breda, which is the side upon which we should have approached Antwerp, under cover of which I am inclined to think that batteries for cannon might have been established within the distance of 600 yards, without regular approaches being made for that purpose.

Does the suburb to which you allude consist of stone buildings and a description of materials which it would not have been easy for the enemy to destroy in such a degree as to deprive the British army of the cover of such buildings?—All the houses in that country, as far as my recollection serves me, are of stone and brick, principally I believe of stone; there are no wooden houses in that country, to my recollection.

When you state that the army might have been before Antwerp with the necessary means for its bombardment upon the 8th, upon what scale of ordnance is your calculation founded?—The proportion of mortars and guns would have depended upon the judgment of the officer commanding the artillery and the commanding engineer; but I should conceive, as far as my humble judgment goes, that about an equal proportion of mortars and guns, and I should have imagined likewise that about 30 pieces of heavy ordnance would have been as many as our means would have enabled us to carry up in the time mentioned.

What expectation of reducing the town of Antwerp by such an attack as you have now described the British army would have had the means of making, should you have entertained?—I should imagine that by a vigorous bombardment and cannonade from the number of pieces of ordnance I have mentioned, so populous a

town as Antwerp is, and garrisoned badly, as I believe it then was, might have been speedily intimidated into a surrender.

Might not such an attack upon the town of Antwerp have been materially assisted by the use of the rockets that attended the army?—I had an opportunity of seeing those rockets used at Flushing; they certainly are very tremendous in their appearance, and alarm, considerably those against whom they are directed, and unquestionably would set fire to any combustible substance they met with.

Supposing the town of Antwerp in the possession of the British army, would it in your judgment have been practicable under the protection of the houses to have taken means for destroying the arsenals and the ships of war building on the slips at Antwerp, notwithstanding any opposition that could be reasonably expected from the citadel?—We could only have possessed ourselves of a part of Antwerp, that part which was under the immediate influence of the citadel of course we could not have possessed; but I do conceive that under cover of the buildings we might have established guns that would have borne upon the ships on the stocks and the arsenal, which in probability would have succeeded in destroying the greater part of them; when once a conflagration took place, it is to be presumed it would have spread.

Supposing the communication between the town and the arsenal to be open, would it not have been practicable at night, without exposing the troops to any very serious injury from the fire of the citadel, to have carried all description of materials for setting fire to the ships, and to have applied them effectually for that purpose?—I understand that the arsenal is surrounded by a wall, and therefore I do conceive it would have been difficult to have destroyed it by those means; I think the only chance we had of destroying it was by howitzers, shells and rockets; I doubt whether we should have been able to have approached it so near as to have done it by hand.

If the wall to which you allude is a wall not erected for purposes of defence, but to prevent pillage of the materials in the arsenal, could there have been any difficulty by the fire of artillery in opening that wall so as to give to the troops a free access to the arsenal?—No doubt artillery will destroy any brick wall or moderately thin stone wall; but I think the object

might have been effected without having recourse to those means.

You have stated, that you served with the British army in the department of the quarter-master general at Antwerp, in the year 1794; have the goodness to state to the Committee your recollection of the nature and state of the works of Antwerp, at that period.—My recollection does not serve me to give an account of the nature of the works, except only that it is a continuation of curtain and bastions, I do not now speak of the citadel, but of the town, which appeared to me at that time to have been suffered to go into a considerable degree of decay, in short to have been a neglected place, so far as its defences went; I remember that the bridge over which you enter from the side of Brussels was a permanent stone or brick bridge, that there was no draw-bridge at that gate, that there was no water in the ditch on that side of the town, and that certainly there were gardens in the ditch; I did not see any cannon mounted on any part of the walls; the citadel appeared to me to be in a more perfect state, to have water in its ditches and some guns mounted on the ramparts, it was at that time used as a magazine for forage; by the Austrians, there were no soldiers in it, except the guard protecting the forage; the citadel is a regular pentagon, with ravelines before four of its curtains, the curtain on the side to the river has no raveline before it.

Did you observe the works of the town to have any covered way?—I did not; there was no palisade beyond the counterscarp, nor did there appear to be any thing that could be called a covered way; the ground might have risen in parts at a certain distance from the counterscarp, but there was nothing shaped like a covered way, as far as my observation went.

Did you observe the suburbs and gardens to approach close to the gates of the town and the counterscarp of the ditch?—The suburb on the road from Brussels, called Bercham, is at some distance from the town; but the suburb on the Breda road, which is called Burgherhont, to the best of my recollection almost connected itself with the gate of the town; as to gardens approaching, I cannot speak positively.

Upon the whole, did you consider the town of Antwerp as a respectable fortification, or as a large populous city with a rampart and ditch, which had in a mi-

litary sense fallen into neglect?—Certainly in the state I saw Antwerp it could not be called a respectable fortification, far from it.

Supposing the army had continued in health, do you conceive that the disembarkation of the army might have been effected on the 25th of August near Santvliet, without prejudice to its safety from any force the enemy might have brought against it in the field?—I do think, and indeed I am sure, that if the army had been in a state to have acted against the enemy on the 25th of August, it would have been landed, and I should not have been apprehensive that the safety of it would have been risked.

You say, if the army had been in a state to have acted against the enemy; to what circumstance do you mean to apply that expression, do you mean to apply it to the sickness of the army?—I do entirely so.

Are you of opinion, or have you reason to know, that if the army had then been in a healthy state, it would have been the determination of the commander in chief to land the army, with a view to open the Scheldt by the reduction of Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, if sir R. Strachan had required such an aid from the army?—I have no doubt but that such an attempt would have been made.

With what prospect of success do you conceive that such an attempt might have been made upon the 25th, supposing the army had been then in a completely effective state, and in perfect health?—Reckoning confidently, as I do, upon the gallantry and spirit of enterprise of the navy and the army, I entertain a sanguine belief that we might have succeeded in taking Liefkenshoeik, and probably Lillo, which would have opened the Scheldt for the navy, and might have led to important consequences.

What was your opinion previously to sailing, as to the probability of the success of the Expedition, according to the originally projected plan, and the information received?—The accomplishment of all the objects of the Expedition appeared to me to be from the first doubtful, because they materially depended upon the state of the winds and weather to have enabled us to have entered the Scheldt: but I am of opinion, that if Cadsand had been in our possession, and we had reached Santvliet by the 3d of August, there would have been a very fair prospect of success.

To what causes do you principally attribute the failure of the Expedition against Antwerp?—I consider the unfortunate necessity which obliged the whole armament to have been assembled in the Roompot, as fatal to the ulterior objects of the Expedition; and I must conclude, that it would not have been had recourse to had the intricacies of the Slough passage been known before we left England, for from the prevalence of South-west winds, after our arrival off the coast of Zealand, it became impracticable to move the transports round the North-west side of Walcheren, by which the original intention to carry the force destined to operate against Antwerp up the West Scheldt, was defeated, so that an operation which might have been performed in four or five days from the Downs was lengthened to three weeks, that time having been occupied in passing all the transports before-mentioned through the Slough, a distance of only 15 miles; and I would beg leave further to add that it is greatly to be lamented that the right wing of the army, destined to act against Antwerp, had not been led at once from the Downs into the Wielin passage, when the possession of Cadsand, and a safe entry into the West Scheldt, would have been immediately secured, this leaving the left wing of the army, allotted to reduce the island of Walcheren, to itself.

Supposing the armament had been assembled at Santvliet in the beginning of the month of August instead of at the close of that month, what prospect are you now of opinion would there then have existed of ultimate success?—I think I have already said, that if the armament had arrived at Santvliet by the 3d of August, there would have been a fair prospect of success, in my humble opinion.

State to the Committee from what description of persons the intelligence reported in your journal as quartermaster-general was obtained, by the officers transmitting the same to you, so far as you have any knowledge upon that subject?—I know that they were the most intelligent persons that could be selected among the lower class of people willing to undertake so dangerous an enterprise.

Were they persons of the country, not known to the officers employing them previously to their arrival with the Expedition?—I believe so, I cannot speak from any knowledge of my own as to that fact; but I take for granted they were



unknown to the officers before they were employed.

From your knowledge of the country in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, do you consider it a healthy country for troops to operate in?—I consider it perfectly healthy.

Did the navy and the troops embarked in the transports continue healthy during the service in the Scheldt?—I believe the navy were healthy from the beginning to the end of the Expedition, I never heard of any sickness in the navy; and the troops were healthy so long as they continued in the transports.

Do you consider that the detention of the troops in South Beveland for such a length of time was the principal cause of the sickness in that portion of the army?—I believe the sickness first shewed itself in South Beveland; there was no sickness during the siege of Flushing, when the troops were occupied.

Was such detention of the army in South Beveland unexpected, and forming no part of the original plan of the Expedition?—It was certainly unexpected.

As far as your means of information went, what do you consider to have been the composition and quality of the enemy's force assembled for the defence of Antwerp?—From the accounts we received of the force, it is impossible to form any respectable opinion of it; it was composed principally of the depôts of regiments, which it is generally known are the refuse of those corps.

Supposing the operations of the army to have been conducted with due precautions, do you consider the security of the army was improvidently hazarded, from the nature of the enterprise itself?—I do not.

Supposing the garrison of Flushing had not been reinforced, what influence, are you of opinion, that circumstance would have had in point of time upon the reduction of the place?—Flushing was reinforced to more than double its original numbers, and I think it is very likely that if the garrison had been weaker the mode of proceeding against the place would have been different; that the batteries in the first instance would have been established nearer, and that the place might have fallen within five days of the time that it did; in short, that it would have been approached in a less formal way.

Would it have been consistent with the state of the army to have supplied

a working party of 4,000 men to the erection of the necessary works for the bombardment of Antwerp?—I think it would, certainly.

Do you conceive that the strength of the enemy early in August was such as to be capable of opposing any serious resistance to the advance of the army to Antwerp?—I believe that if we had arrived at Santvliet by the 3d of August, we should have found no enemy in the field.

Would the bringing up the heavy ordnance and engineers stores have been covered by the movement of the army, and consequently free from interruption?—Care would have been taken to have furnished sufficient escorts for the different convoys, so as to have guarded against any probability of risk happening to them.

Did you count upon a very considerable aid of seamen to support the operations of the army towards Antwerp, and to assist in transporting the artillery stores and other requisites?—We certainly did, and I have no doubt that such aid would have been most cheerfully and generously granted by the admiral.

State to the Committee what the nature of the roads is by which you conceive the advance would have been made from Santvliet to Antwerp?—I never was at Santvliet, and therefore I cannot say what the nature of the roads are between Santvliet and the great road leading from Antwerp to Bergen-op-Zoom; that road I have been, we should have as soon as possible got into that road, which is a sand road, until you reach the village of Merxten, when there is a paved road from thence to Antwerp: I take it for granted that the distance from Santvliet to that road cannot be more than five miles.

From your general knowledge of the nature of those roads, do you apprehend any serious obstacle would have presented itself to the advance of the army?—There would have been no obstacle, but the deepness of the sand, which I think we should have surmounted without much difficulty.

Are you of opinion that with such aid as the navy might have afforded, and whilst the main body of the army was advancing against Antwerp, an effort might have been made by a conjoint force to reduce the fort of Leifkenshoeik, and thereby get possession of the boom across the river?—I think it very probable that such an effort would have been made.

From the nature of the work of Liefkenshoeik itself, are you of opinion that such an effort might have been made with a probability of success?—The operation would have been a very difficult one, because you can approach only by a dyke, understanding that the country was flooded on the left bank of the river; but I think that with the aid we should have derived from the armed vessels of the fleet, a corps of 2,000 men, which is the utmost we could have spared for that object, might have got possession of Liefkenshoeik.

Do you recollect the period at which the inundation took effect at Liefkenshoeik?—I do not immediately recollect the date, it is noted in the journal, but I take it to have been towards the 10th or 12th of Aug.; I am sure it was not earlier than we had such information.

Do you recollect whether Liefkenshoeik was casemated?—I have been in Liefkenshoeik, and I do not think it is casemated.

What were the instructions given to sir Eyre Coote, for the government of his conduct in the reduction of Walcheren?—I have them here; there were two instructions to sir Eyre Coote—[The witness delivered them in, and they were read.]

In your communication with lord Huntley respecting the landing on Cadsand to be executed by the division of the army under his command did you give him reason to believe that the landing was not to take place unless 2,000 men could be put on shore at one operation?—I did not; I would beg leave to say, that on the 24th of July, when I went to Deal on purpose to communicate with sir R. Strachan and sir H. Popham, by lord Chatham's orders, to regulate the details of the service we were about to execute, I particularly desired to know what means could be furnished for landing the troops on Cadsand, I was told, both by the admiral and sir H. Popham, but particularly by the latter, that there would be the aid of the boats of lord Gardner's squadron, and, in short, that there would be ample means; there was no specific number of men mentioned: I think I met lord Huntley at Deal shortly after I came from the admiral, he was very anxious on the subject of the means of landing his force, and I repeated to him the conversation I had just had with the admiral and sir Home Popham.

Were any orders given to lord Huntley respecting landing on Cadsand, besides

the letter of instructions addressed by you to his lordship, and dated the 24th of July 1809?—There were no orders given to his lordship; I wrote two letters to lord Huntley subsequently to that of the 24th of July, which related to the operations intrusted to him; the first letter was written in consequence of my lord Huntley having wished to speak with the Venerable (the ship on board of which I was), the morning we sailed from the Downs; but from the situation in which the Venerable was at the time he came up in a gun-brig, she could not heave to, to speak to him, and before an opportunity offered for her heaving to, lord Huntley's vessel was recalled by signal from commodore Owen; I in consequence wrote to my lord Huntley on the 29th of July.—[The witness read the letter, and then delivered it in.]

General Brownrigg.—The next letter I wrote to his lordship was on the following day, in answer to a letter I received from lord Huntley; his letter to me was merely to ask a question. He begged my opinion, with which brigade of his division he should land, whether with that intended to act against Cadsand, or that meant to make a demonstration or to land, if necessary, in Zoutland bay: to which I answered as follows:—[The witness read the letter, and then delivered it in.]

General Brownrigg.—I beg leave to say, I was justified in making the assurance contained in that letter, because I mentioned to sir H. Popham my being writing to lord Huntley, and asked whether I might continue to him an assurance of the same aid I had promised him at Deal. I would request permission to observe, with regard to any number of men being specified to be landed at Cadsand, and to prove such was not the case, I have lord Huntley's report in my hand, in which he does not notice such a circumstance; and I believe in his evidence before this Committee he has said, that there was no number of men specified to him to be landed at any one period. I would request to give in lord Huntley's report, which I believe is not before the Committee.—[The witness delivered it in, and it was read.]

Did any correspondence take place between you and admiral sir R. Strachan, in your capacity of quarter-master-general, in which was communicated lord Chatham's desire that the army should be forwarded to its ultimate destination?—I had the honour to write several letters to

sir R. Sturgeson during the late Expedition; the letters that relate particularly to the forwarding the armament up the Scheldt I have in my hand.—[The witness delivered in three letters; dated Middleburg, 4th, 6th, and 12th of August 1809; which were read.]

What was your impression of the co-operation expected from the navy in the attack on Flushing?—The grounds on which I had every reason to expect the early co-operation of the navy in the bombardment of Flushing, were, that at every conversation at which I was present, at which the plan of operation against Walcheren was talked of, that was always considered as an indispensable measure; the expediency of such a distribution of a portion of the bombs of the fleet was early pointed out in the first paper that was written as a plan of attack on the island of Walcheren, by captain sir H. Popham, colonel Fyers, and lieut. col. D'Arcy of the engineers, to whom the subject was referred, in the first instance: I have a copy of that paper here, which I beg leave to present.—[The witness delivered it in, and it was read.]

\* General Brownrigg.—I beg leave to add to what I have already said, that this important feature was never lost sight of, which appears from the tenor of the admiral's circular secret Memorandum, issued to the principal officers of the fleet previous to sailing. The manner in which the bombs and gun-boats were to be placed was likewise designated in a map, prepared under the direction of sir H. Popham. The circumstance is recognized in the disposition prepared by me for the attack; it is moreover in sir E. Coote's instruction. The expediency likewise of pushing a naval force up the West Scheldt, as soon as the armament appeared off the island of Walcheren, is stated in the eighth article of the admiral's instructions from the admiralty. And it is further to be remarked, that had not lord Chatham felt himself fully warranted in looking for such co-operation at the time the troops advanced to the investment of Flushing, his lordship would hardly have sent one of his aides-de-camp from the field to request that the admiral would then order that co-operation to take place. The circumstance is to be found in sir H. Popham's paper of Memoranda, which I believe is not before the Committee. [The Witness delivered it in, and it was read.]

After the reduction of Flushing, what means were taken by lord Chatham to provide for the defence of the island of Walcheren?—Lord Chatham's attention was very early called to this subject; on the 4th of Aug. lord Chatham directed me to write a letter to col. Fyers, the commanding engineer, which I have here; there was a second letter written to col. Fyers on the same subject on the 17th of Aug. and lord Chatham's attention was more particularly called to the circumstance of the defence of Flushing in consequence of a letter received by me on the 4th or 5th of Sept., containing certain queries from the then secretary to the commander in chief, col. Gordon; which queries are contained with their answers in the papers now in my hand. [The Witness delivered in the three papers, which were read.]

What was the state of the equipments of the army, as sent out from this country?—The army certainly was complete in its equipment.

Do you consider that the army was embarked in an effective state as to its number, and were all the sick and ineffective men of the different corps left behind at their depôts?—There were none but effective men embarked.

Had you any wants of any description to represent, previously to sailing or during the service?—I have said, the army was perfect in its equipment; I am not aware of its having laboured under any want that could have been supplied in England.

What was the state of the discipline of the army under lord Chatham's command?—I may safely say that the army was in the best state of discipline; and I believe that fewer instances of irregularity occurred in that army, for the period that it was acting in an enemy's country, than has been usual on former occasions: I recollect but one instance of outrage that was committed.

Is it consistent with your knowledge, that a plan of operations by Tolen and South Beveland, was ever entertained as one to be acted upon?—No such plan was ever entertained, to my knowledge.

Was any plan for landing the armament on South Beveland, passing it from one extremity to the other, and from thence passing to the continent, ever, to your knowledge, entertained as one to be acted upon?—Never.

Are you aware of sir R. Sturgeson's hav-

ing proposed such a plan of proceeding to lord Chatham, as early as the first of August?—I am not aware of any such proposition having been made to lord Chatham; and if there had, I do conceive that before my lord Chatham at once gave into an idea which went the length of at once abandoning the original plan of operations, he would at least have been anxious to have satisfied himself of the practicability of it; and particularly that he would have been desirous to have received a report from the distinguished gen. (sir J. Hope) who was then employed in taking possession of that island: I might further add, that it would not appear that my lord Chatham had given the admiral reason to suppose that he had acquiesced in such an arrangement; for, on the 2d of Aug., the following day, sir R. Strachan writes to my lord Chatham as follows: [The Witness read the letter, and then delivered it in.]

General *Brownrigg*.—As a further proof, if it is necessary, I would only beg leave to refer to my letter of the 4th of August, already before the Committee, to sir R. Strachan, desiring that the transports might be passed through the Slough Passage, and assembled off Rammekins, for the purpose of proceeding up the West Scheldt.

What in your opinion would have been the leading objections to the landing the whole armament intended to have acted against Antwerp, exclusive of the heavy ordnance, from the Slough Passage on South Beveland, and moving them to the Eastern extremity of that island, there to re-embark for Santvliet?—The objections appear to me to be numerous; but before I mention them, I must remark, that it would not have saved much labour or time, because, before the transports came to the point of debarkation in the Slough Passage, they must have passed through four-fifths of the distance. I will now enumerate what in my humble opinion were the objections to the operation: the difficulty and delay of assembling the transports at the point of debarkation; the tedious operation of landing in such a situation, which would have required with great exertion (in my humble opinion, and with great deference to the naval authority who has gone before me in giving his opinion upon this subject) at least four days; the necessity of previously forming depôts of forage and provisions in the island of South Beveland, the na-

ture of the roads in South Beveland being ill calculated for the many wheel-carriages that must have pursued the same track, which at the east end of the island, I think I may venture to say, would towards the end of such an operation have become absolutely impracticable; the buildings all over the island would not have been sufficient to have covered the troops; there would have been a very great scarcity, if not an absolute want of fresh water; many accidents might have been expected to have occurred to the horses in their disembarkation, in a place so little calculated for that operation; besides the necessity there would have been to have subjected them, (the cavalry) to the double operation of a re-embarkation at Bathz, and a re-disembarkation. It had at one period, early in Aug. been represented to lord Chatham, that the horses of the cavalry were suffering from being so long on board ship; his lordship consulted with my lord Rosslyn and my lord Paget, both lieut. generals of cavalry, as to the expediency of such an arrangement, and they both decidedly gave it as their opinion that it was better that the horses should remain on board ship than be subject to the double operation of disembarkation upon Beveland, and an eventual re-embarkation at Bathz, with a consequent disembarkation on the continent. Those are the principal objections which I have, with great submission, to offer upon that subject.

What time do you suppose it would have taken the cavalry and infantry transports, and ordnance horse transports, to proceed from the Roompot to the intended place of disembarkation in the Slough?—In answer to that question, I can only speak to what actually occurred: the infantry of lord Rosslyn's division and the whole of lord Huntley's division which were landed upon South Beveland, began to move from the Veere Gat, I believe, on the 5th of August, and disembarked on the 9th, a distance I suppose of about 12 miles; the cavalry transports, which were requested on the 4th of Aug. to be passed through the Slough with all the expedition possible (and I believe that every exertion was used for that purpose,) passed the place where they would have disembarked in the Slough on the 13th of Aug., and the whole of the cavalry, ordnance, store ships and victuallers had not all passed through before the 20th or 21st.

Did not you see the instructions that were given to commodore Owen?—I did; sir H. Popham himself communicated them to be.

Are you aware that commodore Owen stated exactly to the marquis of Huntley the number of troops he could disembark in the men-of-war's boats and in the transports boats?—No further than I read it in commodore Owen's evidence; I presume he did; I do not know whether lord Huntley noticed it in his report or not.

Do you recollect the number of troops that the two descriptions of boats were reported to be able to carry?—My information on that matter I can only have drawn from Commodore Owen's evidence.

Commodore Owen has stated, that the men-of-war's boats could carry from 6 to 700, and that the transports boats could carry an equal number, making in all 1,400; if to that number the proportion of men that lord Gardner's boats could have carried, according to the evidence before the House being 600, is added, that will make 2,000 men; would not 2,000 men have been considered fully sufficient, or what you considered ample means for disembarkation on Cadsand, supposing all the boats had been collected?—I think that means being provided for landing 2,000 men would have been ample; I can only speak generally to that point, because I do not know what the numbers of the enemy were on shore; but if I had had the direction of that operation, I should have thought, unless the force on shore was very great, the power of landing 2,000 men at once would have been sufficient.

Were not you informed at Deal that such was the arrangement for boats to attend commodore Owen?—I have already stated in my evidence that I was assured that the boats of lord Gardner's division would be afforded in addition to those of commodore Owen's squadron.

You have stated in your evidence, that it was to be lamented that the whole of the right wing did not go into the Wielin channel with commodore Owen; did not lord Rosslyn's and general Grosvenor's divisions constitute the right wing?—Lord Rosslyn's and gen. Grosvenor's divisions composed a part of the right wing.

What other part of the army, except the marquis of Huntley's division, lord Rosslyn's, and general Grosvenor's?—The reserve of the army also composed a part

of the right wing, which portion I ought to have excepted when I spoke of the whole of the right wing of the army being led to the Wielin passage, the destination of the reserve being South Beveland, and it was very properly directed to the Eastern Scheldt.

Are you aware, or do you recollect, that lord Chatham thought it advisable that lord Rosslyn's and gen. Grosvenor's divisions should not accompany commodore Owen, but remain at Deal for 24 hours after all the army had sailed?—I recollect that it was thought advisable, for some naval reason, that the armament should sail by divisions; but I am not aware of any objection or any wish having been expressed by lord Chatham, that the divisions of the right wing, with the exception of the reserve, should not proceed with commodore Owen, if the admiral had judged it proper to have made such an arrangement.

Do you recollect having written to sir Home Popham a letter, saying, that lord Chatham agreed it was advisable for the divisions before mentioned to remain 24 hours after the armament had sailed?—I really had not recollected having written such a letter, it is now before me, dated Ramsgate 22d July, in which the last paragraph is, "Lord Chatham agrees in its being advisable to delay the sailing of lord Rosslyn's division until 24 hours after the departure of the armament: I have not heard you notice gen. Grosvenor's division, which embarked at Harwich; it takes no part in the first operation, and if convenient to naval arrangements might remain to proceed with lord Rosslyn's."

Were not the instructions that were given to the different divisional officers by sir R. Strachan, generally, if not altogether, communicated to you or to lord Chatham?—They were most liberally communicated, there was no reserve whatever; and I trust there was none on my part towards the admiral or sir Home Popham.

Do you recollect ever to have expressed a wish for any alteration that could have been made, consistently with the circumstance of the profession, in the naval instructions to the different officers, that sir R. Strachan did not most cheerfully comply with?—I am persuaded, that whatever wish lord Chatham might have expressed to sir R. Strachan, would have been acceded to, had it been proper:

and I would request to say something in explanation of the remark, wherein I have lamented that the right wing of the army had not been conducted to the Weilin passage; it arises from the experience I have gained since we sailed from England; I could not know (not myself being a professional sailor) which was the most advisable track to take, that must have rested with the admiral; but the more I have reflected upon the subject, the more I do lament that that line of proceeding had not been adopted.

When you spoke of a drawing for the attack upon Zoutland bay, in which the positions of the bombs were placed, was it not antecedent to the change of plan of landing upon Domburgh, with a view of going into the Roonpot, in case there should be so great a surf on Domburgh beach as to render the landing impracticable?—It certainly was, I saw the plan in London; but I have already stated in my evidence, that I do not conceive that the alteration made in the place of landing upon the island of Walcheren at all affected the intended distribution of the vessels for bombarding Flushing at the time of the approach of the army, or whenever it might be thought right between the officers commanding the naval and military service to direct the use of them.

Do you recollect when the bombs and the flotilla got into the West Scheldt, in a position from whence they might have bombarded Flushing?—The period when the flotilla first got into the West Scheldt is noted in the journal; I believe it was about the 5th or 6th of August, I speak from belief; I cannot charge my memory with the date. I would beg leave to refer to the journal as to the period when the flotilla first got into the West Scheldt. But I would remark, that we did not want the bombs in the West Scheldt, to bombard Flushing; we wanted them to the Westward of Flushing, in Zoutland Bay, or in the Duerloo Passage.

Are you aware that that is by no means the position that was originally proposed; that that was South-east of Flushing?—I do not recollect the positions as they were drawn upon the map; but I do conceive that the bombs might have been placed in any situation by the admiral's order, because they could equally well act to the Westward as to the Eastward.

Are you aware that lord Chatham desired capt. Cockburn not to throw any

shells into the town, after he reported that he was ready to bombard the town?—I am not aware of lord Chatham having had any communication with capt. Cockburn upon that subject; but I conceive much would depend upon the period when the offer was made.

If the offer was made before the batteries on shore were ready to play upon the town, would that offer in your opinion have been accepted then?—I cannot positively say whether it would or would not; if the offer was made then, and rejected by lord Chatham, he might have had reasons for it which he did not communicate to me.

Do you recollect that an application was made to lord Chatham on the 11th of August, when the frigates passed through the Weilin, by capt. Cockburn, for permission to throw some shells into the town, by way of taking off the fire of the batteries from the frigates, and that an objection was made to it by lord Chatham?—I do not recollect any such thing; and I do believe that my lord Chatham was not aware of the particular period when the frigates were to pass through, not that I conceive it was necessary he should have been advised of it; I know as far as I am concerned I was not aware of it, and it was matter of surprise to me, when I heard the firing in consequence of their passing through: I mean to mark, that there was no previous communication of the day when it was to happen, not that I think it was necessary that a previous communication should have been made.

Did not sir R. Strachan either write to lord Chatham or state to him, that he would order the frigates to come through, antecedent to their coming through?—He certainly did, early in August, mention his intentions that he should order the frigates through; it was four or five days before they did actually come through, but I conclude it was the winds prevented them.

You are satisfied that the frigates, in consequence of a sudden change of wind, came through without there being time absolutely to calculate the moment in which they might pass?—I have no doubt of it; and I must again say, I do not think it was necessary for lord Chatham, or any individual of his staff, to have been apprized of the hour or the day when they were to pass, it was immaterial.

Are you acquainted with the beach at Santylict?—I am; I was ashore myself;

I went on purpose to reconnoitre the beach.

At what time was that?—I think it was the 22d or 23d of August, I went with sir Home Popham.

You have spoken of many calculations as to the time at which the army might probably arrive at Santvliet, and the length of time it might take to arrive at Antwerp; were those calculations made previous to the sailing of the Expedition?—They certainly were, I had turned the subject in my mind seriously.

On what grounds did you calculate that the army would have arrived at Santvliet on the 3d of August?—From the distance that might probably be run in that time.

Is the Committee to understand that you made that calculation from merely measuring the distance on the map, or from consultation with any naval officers as to the possible difficulties in the Scheldt?—Not certainly from measuring the distance in the map, but from knowing that the run to the mouth of the Scheldt was not more than 12 or 14 hours with a fair wind; and taking it for granted that the Scheldt did not present serious naval obstacles, which I had been given to understand, in concert with the naval officers: I had heard sir Home Popham give that as his opinion.

Did you not understand it was necessary to buoy a part of the Scheldt, in order to insure the safety of the ships going up?—I did; I saw sir H. Popham's arrangements for that purpose.

Is the Committee to understand, sir H. Popham gave it as his opinion to you, that probably the army would be landed at Santvliet on the 3d of August?—Sir H. Popham gave me no such opinion; I drew the inference of the probability of it myself.

Had you any naval authority to justify the supposition of the army arriving at Santvliet on the 3d of August?—I do not recollect that I had.

Supposing the army to have arrived at Santvliet on the 3d of August, how long are you of opinion it would have taken to have landed the army, the artillery, the horses and the stores necessary?—I think it would have taken four days.

After the army, artillery, and so forth, were landed, how many days do you think it would have taken, to be in such a state with that army as to open batteries against Antwerp?—I think, if the army had as-

sembled at Santvliet by the 3d, it might have been disembarked, and might have been in a situation to have opened batteries upon Antwerp by the 9th or 10th.

Then you are of opinion, that, in the course of four days from the day when the army set off from Santvliet with the artillery, you could have opened batteries against Antwerp?—No, that 'is not my opinion; the army would, I suppose, have arrived by divisions, and the disembarkation might have commenced before the 3d; the earliest division would have arrived, giving them four days for their passage, on the 30th: the disembarkation of the first division would have commenced on the 1st; and, if the divisions had followed in regular succession, the disembarkation of the others would have taken place in the two following days; the army would have been put in motion as soon as two divisions were landed.

Is the Committee to understand, that lord Chatham sailed upon this Expedition grounding his hopes of success upon such calculations?—I cannot speak to what lord Chatham's hopes of success might have been; I humbly give my own opinion here.

Were these calculations made by you previously to the sailing ever communicated to lord Chatham?—The subject was spoken of in conversation; the probability was reasoned upon.

Did lord Chatham agree to that reasoning?—I cannot say that he came to any definitive opinion upon it.

The Committee is to understand that you expected to be at Antwerp so as to have the batteries open about the 9th or 10th?—Yes.

Are you aware of the force of the enemy about that time?—I think the force at Antwerp on the 8th is reported to have been about 5,000 troops, in addition to the armed bergbers and artificers.

Of how many is the estimate of a Dutch battalion, and a French battalion?—I believe they are about 700 men each.

On the 8th of August, it is stated in the intelligence communicated by sir William Erskine, that at Antwerp there were about 2,000 French, and upwards of 1,000 Dutch troops of the line; "besides this force," it is said, "all the workmen in the arsenal of Antwerp have been organized and trained for these two years past, they amount to 5 or 6,000 men regularly organized and disposable for the defence of the place; the crews of the ships

amount to upwards of 11,000 men, also disposable for the same object; between 4 and 5,000 Dutch infantry and five squadrons of cavalry, on their march from North Holland; troops moving in every direction from France and Holland in waggons: It was reported that all the waggons in Brabant were put in requisition to bring 15,000 of the French Westphalian army; and it was thought that within ten days the French would have an army of 40,000 men;" have you any reason to doubt the general accuracy of that statement?—I have always been in the habit of receiving such intelligence with very great caution; and I believe when numbers are given there is occasion for it.

You have no reason to doubt the accuracy of that intelligence beyond the general doubts you entertain of all intelligence of a similar nature?—No.

What was the force with which you expected the army to march from Santvliet, after leaving a sufficient proportion of the intire army that sailed from England for the operations in Walcheren?—We should have arrived in Santvliet with about 23,000 men.

Is that after leaving a certain body of men in South Beveland?—No.

Was it then intended to march from Santvliet with 23,000 men, leaving no force of ours in possession of South Beveland?—A force certainly would have been left in South Beveland, 2,000 men at least would have been left there; but I always calculated upon 2 or 3,000 men being taken from the force that was left in Walcheren, because I think that force might have been very well spared after their batteries had been established, or in a state of advancement, and if the garrison of Flushing had not been reinforced.

Then your expectation was to land at Santvliet with 23,000 men, for operations upon the Continent?—I think we might have fairly calculated upon that.

Would any part of that force of 23,000 men have been required to watch Bergen-op-Zoom?—Certainly, we should have left 5 or 6,000 to have watched Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo.

Then it is your opinion that 17,000 men would have been disposable for operations upon Antwerp exclusively?—It is, about that number.

In the 5 or 6,000 men spoken of for Bergen-op-Zoom and Lillo, is there included the force necessary to keep up the

communication of the army between Santvliet, and Antwerp?—The distance is so short that the communication would have been sufficiently watched or preserved by patrols of cavalry.

What is the actual force which you are of opinion could have been employed upon the attack of Antwerp, such military precautions being taken as were necessary under all the circumstances of their march from Santvliet to Antwerp?—I call the whole force that would have marched from Santvliet a force employed against Antwerp; I say 17,000 men.

You are of opinion that landing at Santvliet with 23,000 men, taking all military precautions according to the circumstances of the country in the march from Santvliet to Antwerp, there would have been under the command of lord Chatham for the actual attack on Antwerp a force of 17,000 men?—I think there would, there would have been detachments from that to have kept up the communications, and sent with convoys; but I take for granted also, that there was no enemy in the field at that time.

If in forming these calculations you had been aware of what would be the force of the enemy, of which intelligence was received on the 9th, would it have altered your opinion as to the propriety of marching against Antwerp, with 17,000 men?—The force of the enemy, by intelligence on the 9th, in the field, is very small, the principal force is represented to be in Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp, and therefore I think we should have run no risk in moving towards Antwerp with 17,000 men against the force represented to be in the field on the 9th of August; when I speak of the field, I speak of the country between Breda and Antwerp.

Did you give credit to that part of the intelligence that stated, that on the 9th the force of the enemy was hourly increasing?—I certainly had no doubt it was increasing, but the intelligence does not state in what proportion it was increasing.

Are you aware of what was stated to be the force of the enemy on the 11th of August?—I have a memorandum here, that on the 11th of August sir William Erskine reports that there were eight battalions of Dutch at Bergen-op-Zoom, which were changed for 5,000 French; and which I do not believe was true, because I believe that the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom was always Dutch.



Do you doubt the country, or the amount of the force?—I believe there were 4,000 men in Bergen-op-Zoom at that time, which was a very insufficient garrison for Bergen-op-Zoom.

Have you seen the Report of the Secret Committee of this House?—I have.

Was all the intelligence contained in that Report known to you at the time of its several dates?—It was not; I never saw the intelligence stated in the Report of the Secret Committee till I read it in the Minutes of the proceedings of this House.

When on the 26th of August, in the reference made to the lieutenant generals by direction of lord Chatham, you state the enemy's force at 35,000 men, I presume you were satisfied the force was to that amount; were the sources from which you derived that knowledge that there were 35,000 men at that time in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, of the same nature with the sources which had furnished the intelligence from day to day previous to the 26th of August?—I confess that I had considerable doubts as to the amount of that force; my opinion was, that the intelligence was exaggerated, but I believe the sources from whence that intelligence was derived were the same.

What was the force which you in your own mind believed to exist at that time, when it was stated at 35,000?—I believe you may fairly deduct 5,000 men from it at least.

Does the 35,000 stated in that reference include the seamen and artificers?—It does, it includes the whole that we supposed from intelligence might have been brought against us.

Do you recollect receiving a memorandum, entitled, Confidential, from sir John Hope, dated Schoore, 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, containing this passage: "I do not imagine that Antwerp has ever been in a situation to expose it to be carried by a *coup-de-main*; nor is there, I think, reason to conclude from any information that has been received respecting the state of the fortifications, that at any period we could have got possession of it without erecting works and bringing heavy ordnance before the place?"—I do recollect that there is such an opinion.

Do you dissent from that opinion, and did you express to sir John Hope any dissent at the time?—Sir John Hope entertained rather a more respectable opinion

of the defences of Antwerp than I did; but I do not think my opinion has ever been certain, that Antwerp might be taken by a bombardment; I do not recollect having had any conversation with sir John Hope on the subject of his opinion.

Do you differ with sir John Hope in thinking that at no time we could have got possession of it without erecting works and bringing heavy ordnance before the place?—I think that if the rampart of the place had been assailable, we might have taken it without establishing batteries against it or without bombarding it; sir John Hope, I believe, never was in the place; I conceive, from the state in which I saw it in 1794, and understanding nothing had been done to it since, that it might have been possible to have found it in that state.

You have spoken of the ditch which surrounded the works of Antwerp in one place being crossed by a stone bridge, and of the greater part being occupied by gardens; do not you think that bridge might have been very easily destroyed if the enemy was desirous of destroying it?—There is no doubt of it; a bridge is very easily destroyed.

Is it your opinion that the ditch might have been very easily filled with water?—I have heard doubts expressed upon it, because the upper part of the town of Antwerp is higher than the lower, and it has been supposed by some people, better acquainted with it than myself, that the operation of the tide itself would not have filled the ditch so as to have made it a deep wet ditch at the upper part of the town; there is a considerable declivity in the town of Antwerp; it falls very much to the river.

Have you any reason to conceive that that ditch, when constructed, was not designed to be a wet ditch?—I have no doubt it was designed to be a wet ditch; it is in all the old plans described to be a wet ditch; there are rivulets which lead into the ditch, as described upon the maps.

Are you aware of any circumstances which have occurred since its construction, which should prevent its being now filled with water?—Only from its being neglected that it will naturally become shallower; accumulations of earth will form in it.

Have you any knowledge of the depth of that ditch now?—None further than that ditches of that nature of fortification are generally of the same depth that the

scarp is, generally, about 18 feet high from the bottom of the ditch.

You have received no confidential private intelligence of the depth of water that might be introduced into that ditch at present, making allowance for the loss it might have sustained from rubbish, &c. falling into it?—No, I have never received any intelligence as to the depth of water in the ditch.

Then did you speak of Antwerp as being assailable, without knowing the depth of the ditch that might be filled with water?—Antwerp certainly could only have been assailable, if a sufficient part of the scarp had mouldered into the ditch, so as to have made the ditch practicable, with such other means as might have been added at the moment.

Had you any knowledge of any and what parts of the ditch which were so rendered practicable by the falling in of the scarp?—I had no such knowledge; but I thought it not improbable, that in a place of that nature, neglected for a number of years, such places might have presented themselves.

Would not you think it imprudent to march so small a force as 17,000 men against a town, of the defences of which you state yourself to have been so little informed, and surrounded by a country capable of throwing in such reinforcements?—From the intelligence we received, I do not think it would have been imprudent, because that intelligence stated there was little or no force in the country.

With the disposition which you had to distrust all intelligence of that sort, would you still not believe it highly probable, that with ten days notice a sufficient force might be collected in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, more than enough to cope with 17,000 men?—The intelligence I speak of is the intelligence communicated to my lord Chatham before I left England; from what sources that intelligence was derived I cannot speak to, and it is not of the same nature as the intelligence I had a distrust of afterwards: with respect to the reinforcements that might have arrived at Antwerp by the 10th of August, trusting in some degree to the intelligence of an absence of force, I do think it would have been a very difficult thing for the enemy to have collected an army in the field, capable of coping with 17,000 British troops.

In what mode did you propose to attack

Antwerp?—By bombardment, if it had not been found assailable.

Supposing there to have been a garrison amounting to one half of what is stated here, that is, 2,500 men, would it not have been necessary to erect batteries under some protection, or to make approaches in order to cover the troops employed in the bombardment?—A bombardment may take place at the distance even of 2,000 yards; but I suppose the distance would have been probably 1,200 for the establishing of batteries and guns; I think that the very considerable suburb which there was on the side we should have approached, would have afforded such cover as that we might have been enabled at once to have established batteries at the distance of 6 or 700 yards from the place.

In how short a time did you expect the effect of this bombardment to be produced?—In two or three days at the utmost.

Then the successful effect of the bombardment upon the town might in your calculation have been accomplished by the 13th?—I think it might.

What were the operations you proposed to carry on in order to destroy the fleet and the arsenals?—I think we should have found it very difficult to have destroyed the fleet, if at all; because our information went to their having it in their power to send all their ships above the citadel; the means by which we might have destroyed their arsenals and the ships on the stocks would have been by howitzer-shells, carcasses from mortars, and rockets.

Did that which is now the arsenal exist when you were at Antwerp in the year 1794?—No, there was no such place.

Are you well informed as to the position and extent of the present arsenals at Antwerp?—I understand that they occupy the space from the citadel, to about half the length of the quays of Antwerp.

Do you believe that they have been constructed with a view of being protected by the citadel?—I believe that their being constructed there was found the most convenient, the citadel no doubt protects them; if the information I have received is correct, the dock-yard begins where the esplanade was, which is close to the glacis of the citadel.

Do you believe the arsenals to be effectually protected by the citadel?—I should suppose so certainly, that is to say, that they are under the guns of the citadel, but that does not prove them the less attackable.

Have the goodness to describe in what way the attack upon the arsenals was to be conducted.—I have already stated that the arsenals would be destroyed by the effect of howitzer-shells, carcasses, and rockets.

Do you believe that mode of attack, would, under all the circumstances, probably have been effectual?—From the combustible nature of the objects to be destroyed, I have no doubt, that if we could have brought our shells and rockets to have borne upon the arsenal, and the ships upon the stocks, they would have been destroyed.

What length of time do you apprehend that operation would take?—I think it would have been effected probably in the course of six and thirty hours.

That would be about the 16th of Aug. assuming all the other calculations to be correct?—I should have hoped we might have made a considerable progress in the destruction of the arsenal, at the same time that we were bombarding the town.

Supposing the fire to have commenced on the 10th, at what time do you think it probable the town and arsenal of Antwerp would have been destroyed, putting the ships out of the case?—I have said that I thought the town might have been intimidated into a surrender, after a vigorous bombardment, at the end of three days; and I think that if we had not effected the object of the destruction of the arsenal at that time, that after we were in possession of that portion of the town that was to the north-east of it, a few hours afterwards would have insured the destruction of the arsenal, by the opportunity we should have had of placing howitzers on the river's face so as to have enfiladed the arsenal and dock-yard.

Do you apprehend no interruption from the enemy upon the water, from erecting those works upon the sea-face?—I do not speak of erecting any works upon the sea-face, and I do believe that no ship would have remained within shot of the position we might occupy in the town, after we were in possession of it.

Do you know what the width of the Scheldt is at Antwerp?—I do.

Have the goodness to state it.—It is about 800 yards.

Are there any batteries on the left bank of the river opposite to Antwerp?—There are none that bear upon the town of Antwerp; there is the Tête de Flandre, the defences of which are all the other way.

Are you of opinion there would have been any difficulty in the enemy erecting temporary works, in order to prevent any operation of ours upon the sea-face of Antwerp?—I think it is very likely that they would.

Do you think our operations could have been carried on in the way you speak of on the sea-face of Antwerp, if such works had been thrown up?—I think they might, because means would have been devised for protecting the howitzers employed upon that service from the fire of any batteries that there might have been upon the opposite side.

At what distances were those sea-faces on which it was proposed by you to place guns for the destruction of the arsenal, and were they within range of the citadel?—They would undoubtedly have been within range of the shot of the guns of the citadel, in order to have effect upon the arsenal, which is close under the guns of the citadel.

Is the Committee to understand that these operations from the sea-faces upon the arsenal of Antwerp would be exposed to fire from batteries that might have been erected on the other side of the Scheldt, and also from the citadel of Antwerp?—Care would of course have been taken to have protected the howitzers and guns so employed as much as possible; but all men conversant in military matters know that guns that are intended for destruction must always be exposed more or less to the enemy's fire.

Might not the enemy, from batteries on the other side of the river, have enfiladed our works of which you have been speaking?—They certainly might, but the range would have been a very long one.

Upon all your suppositions, supposing the arsenal to have been destroyed, on what day do you think the army would have been upon its march back to Santvliet?—I think we might have commenced our return to Santvliet about the 16th or 17th of August.

From the landing at Santvliet on the 3d to the 16th is thirteen days of active operations; what force do you think the enemy, from all the intelligence that you have received, could have collected to cut off our retreat?—The enemy were not reported to be in considerable force before the 22d of Aug. and therefore I do not think that as early as the 16th there would have been any danger of the retreat of the army being cut off.

What do you mean when you speak of considerable force?—I speak of a reputed force of between 20 and 30,000 men, and that widely scattered too.

Have you any doubts that when the object of our operations were distinctly ascertained, that force would have been concentrated in the most effectual way to interrupt our retreat to our ships?—I think they would have found a very great difficulty in concentrating a force superior to ours.

Is the Committee to understand you to be speaking of our force of 17,000 men?—Yes.

You have said, that you deemed it very unfortunate that the right wing of the army was not all carried into the Wielen Passage, that so it might have gone up the West Scheldt; how long did any part of the force remain in the West Scheldt before it was moved into the Roompot or the Duerloo passage?—There was no part of the force ever in the West Scheldt before it was moved into the Roompot; the fact is, it sailed all directly to the Roompot, with the exception of lord Huntley's division, which went to the Wielen passage, which is at the entrance of the West Scheldt.

How long did the force under lord Huntley remain in the Wielen passage?—It arrived there the 28th of July, at night, and I believe it arrived in the Veer Gat the 5th or 6th of August.

Is it your opinion that the force that was at the entrance of the West Scheldt, under lord Huntley's command, might have taken possession of the batteries of Cadsand?—I take it for granted, from the report of my lord Huntley, that it could not.

What were the causes that you consider as preventing it from taking possession of the batteries of Cadsand?—I would beg leave to refer to lord Huntley's report, who has faithfully stated the causes.

Those causes are in your opinion perfectly sufficient to justify the general of that force from not making the attempt?—In my opinion, certainly.

You have said that the garrison of Flushing was reinforced by 3,000 men from Cadsand, and that that reinforcement enabled the garrison to protract the siege five days longer than it otherwise could; supposing that force had not been transported from Cadsand to Flushing, would it not have been disposable to have marched to Antwerp?—I do not think that it would

have been wholly disposable, they would always have been jealous of our attempting the possession of Cadsand, and consequently would have left there a certain degree of force to have prevented it.

In your opinion, was the possession of Cadsand, or the possession of Flushing, necessary to enable the armament to pass up the West Scheldt?—I think either one or the other was indispensably necessary; there is another passage which we made use of, which is the Slough passage, therefore strictly speaking, it was not necessary; but it was necessary to the success of our operation.

It was indispensably necessary to the passing up in so short a space of time as to afford in your opinion a chance of success?—Certainly either the one or the other; I speak of the whole armament, the transports and victuallers and so on, not the line-of-battle ships.

What force do you suppose to have been on Cadsand at the time the armament left England?—The intelligence that we received, was, that the force there was very small.

What force did you presume it might be in the power of the enemy to throw into Cadsand in two or three days from the arrival of any force of ours upon the coast of Cadsand?—The enemy certainly did bring his force there in a very short time; but I believe that happened from a fortuitous circumstance, which was, that the greater part of the reinforcement of Flushing was composed of men that were actually on their march to the Danube, and that were arrested on their progress at the time.

Had you made any calculation, or received any information upon which you relied, as to the amount of force which it might be probable the enemy might have there in 2 or 3 days after the arrival of any force of ours on the shores of Cadsand?—I had made no calculation, I had no means of making a calculation; I only supposed generally that the enemy had it not in their power to reinforce Cadsand to any great extent, and that half the force sent against it would have been equal to the possession of it.

As you have spoken of the state Antwerp was in, in the year 1794, when you saw it, and the state in which it was represented to be at the time the armament was prepared for the attack of it, what sources of information had you, as to the state of Antwerp at the time of the prepa-

ration of the armament, and for one year before it?—I had no other information respecting Antwerp than what was contained in the papers I had an opportunity of reading, and which were communicated to my lord Chatham.

Then the information given to you by the government, and by lord Chatham, was the only information you received upon that subject?—The only information, together with my own recollection of the place.

That was a recollection of what you saw in 1794?—Yes, it was.

You have said, that if the army had been in a state of good health on the 25th of August, you think an attack might have been made upon Lillo and Liefkenshoeik, with a sanguine belief of success as to Liefkenshoeik, and a probability as to Lillo; had you any accurate information of the state of those forts on that day?—Not upon that day; we had only general information as to the state of them, and which is stated in the journal.

You have said that at the time the Expedition sailed, every regiment going upon service left its sick behind it; had it ever been proposed to take the sick of the regiments to Walcheren, for the recovery of their health?—I never heard of such a proposal, I confess.

You have stated, that upon a computation of complete success, in carrying the different divisions of the fleet from the Downs to Santvliet, the last division would have arrived on the 3d of August, and that 23,000 men would have been landed, applicable to ulterior operations; you have also stated, that the possession of the batteries of Cadsand or of Flushing, one or the other, would have been indispensably necessary to the safe passage of the transports up the West Scheldt; what time would you have allowed, and what number of men, to take possession of the batteries of Cadsand or Flushing, before possession of one or the other of which, as I understand from you, the transports could not have moved up the West Scheldt in safety?—I conceive, that if circumstances had been fortunate, I mean that it had been milder weather, and that there had been more means of landing troops than there were at Cadsand, the island would have been in our possession in a few hours, if we had landed.

Is the Committee to understand that you include in the time of the divisions sailing from the Downs up to the 3d of

August, the taking of the batteries of Cadsand?—I do.

Do you also mean to say, that after having taken the batteries of Cadsand, no force was to have been left upon the island?—After that we had destroyed that batteries upon Cadsand and all the small craft we could have found there, and that all the armament had passed through the Wielin Passage, Cadsand was no longer an object to us; but it was not intended to have abandoned it, the intention was to have embarked lord Huntley's division of the army, and to have replaced it by a detachment from Walcheren, if judged necessary; but that would have been left to the discretion of the general commanding in Walcheren.

All that operation of landing upon Cadsand, destroying the batteries, taking possession of the small craft, and the embarkation of lord Huntley's division destined to that operation, is to be included between the time of sailing from the Downs and the 3d of Aug., by which time you have thought it possible the whole of the armament might have arrived at Santvliet?—I do conceive it was possible.

You have stated, that if Flushing had not been reinforced by troops from Cadsand, you suppose that the operations against Flushing would not have been commenced in the regular form in which they were; at the time the first operations of siege were commenced against Flushing, was it known that any reinforcements had been sent into Flushing?—I conceive it would not have been approached with so much form, that is to say, I do not think that the first parallel would have been opened; with respect to reinforcements from Cadsand into Flushing, we had information of them on the 2d, which was the day after we appeared before the place.

Had the first parallel been commenced before that information was received?—The first parallel, I believe, was not commenced till the 5th or 6th.

Do you know that the plan of the commander in chief, with regard to the operations against Flushing, was changed in consequence of the reinforcements sent in from Cadsand?—It certainly was, upon the first information of their having obtained a considerable supply of troops; I think on the very night of the 1st of Aug. gen. Grosvenor's division of the army was landed upon Walcheren; but this was

done more with a view of preventing the fatigue of the troops, than from an absolute necessity.

Do you know that the plan of operations and siege were changed by the commander in chief in consequence of reinforcements being thrown into Cadsand?—The fact of reinforcements having been thrown into Flushing was known before the plan for the attack of the place was decided upon.

Would the attack upon the place have been different, if the commander in chief had known that reinforcements were thrown in from Cadsand?—I have reason to believe that they would.

What would have been the difference?—Ground would have been opened nearer to the place, and batteries would at first have been established at the distance of 6 or 800 yards.

What force did the commander in chief expect to find in Flushing when he sailed from the Downs?—We expected to have found about 3,500 men, and that force very ill composed, which it certainly was.

Did you take into the calculation of the time between the sailing of the divisions from the Downs, and the 3d of August, the necessity of buoying any part of the channel of the West Scheldt or the entrances thereto?—I really was not sufficiently acquainted with that operation to know what time it might have occupied; I heard sir Home Popham speak of it as an operation that would not require either much time or difficulty.

Are you aware that the arsenals at Antwerp are only separated from the town by a common wall, the same as surrounds our dock-yards, and with no sort of defence?—It has been so described to me.

That being the case, and our army in possession of the town, do you conceive that it would have been at all necessary to have employed either howitzers or any similar means for setting fire to, and destroying the arsenals and ships upon the stocks?—I think that would have been necessary, I confess; because I suppose the arsenal to have been under the fire of the citadel, notwithstanding it had only a wall to divide it from the town.

Supposing there were 8 or 10 sail of the line, besides smaller vessels, upon the stocks a number of piles of timber and planks, ropewalks and various buildings, how do you conceive they could be under the protection of the guns of the citadel?

—So far under their protection, that the guns of the citadel would bear upon those points upon which guns might be brought for the destruction of those materials; and therefore I call the arsenal under the protection of the citadel.

Supposing that part of that wall which has been described as separating the arsenal from the town, had been thrown down so as to have admitted our troops employed upon that particular service to have set fire to the different arsenals, without employing artillery, do you conceive it would have been possible for any guns from the citadel to have prevented such operation?—The arsenal might certainly have been set fire to, but still it is to be supposed the enemy would have taken reasonable precautions to prevent its being done by individuals rushing into it with firebrands to set it on fire.

In the force of 35,000 men which you have stated to the Committee was supposed to be in Antwerp and its vicinity, about the 25th of August, do you include the garrison of Bergen-op-Zoom, of Antwerp, and of the different fortresses immediately in the neighbourhood of Antwerp?—I do; it is all detailed in the statement before the Committee.

Of that force, composed as it was of seamen, of Dutchmen, and Frenchmen, what efficient army, after leaving garrisons in the different places, do you conceive it was practicable for the enemy to bring into the field?—I have already stated, that I believe the enemy would have found it very difficult to have brought an army into the field, and certainly it never could have been considered a respectable force, composed as it was.

Previously to the sailing of the late Expedition, was it within your knowledge that the naval and military commanders in chief fully and unreservedly communicated to each other their respective ideas and plans as to the most advisable means to be pursued by both departments for the successful accomplishment of the important objects of the Expedition?—I do believe they did.

By whom was the arrangement made as to the numbers and equipment of the military part of the Expedition, with reference to the number of artillery, infantry, cavalry, field train, battering train, draught and artillery horses, and ammunition stores of every description that accompanied the Expedition?—I conceive that must have been arranged between the secretary of

state for the war department, the first lord of the admiralty, the master-general of the ordnance, and the commander in chief.

Then the Committee is to understand it was not made by the commander in chief of the Expedition alone?—No, I should think certainly not.

Previously to the sailing of the Expedition, was the occupation of the batteries on Cadsand considered by the naval and military commanders, as essential to the success of the Expedition?—It was; particularly by the naval commander.

You having stated that if the army had landed at Santvliet upon the 3d, they might have been enabled to open their batteries against Antwerp on the 9th or 10th, what number of draught horses were there with the army?—There were about 16 or 1700.

In the event of masking Lillo and Bergen-op-Zoom, how many brigades of field-artillery do you consider necessary to have effected that purpose, and likewise to have accompanied the army?—I conceive that if two brigades of field artillery had been left with the covering army, if I may so call it, it would have been a due proportion, with the three other brigades; besides, a troop of horse artillery would have accompanied the army, the force destined to act against Antwerp.

In all, you mean 36 peices of cannon?—Yes, I do.

How many horses do you suppose are necessary for every brigade of artillery, of course accompanied by their ammunition, wheel-carriages, &c.?—I should suppose 100 horses to each brigade.

Do you suppose that it was possible completely to invest the fort of Lillo, after the inundation?—After the inundations had been perfected, the investment of Lillo would have required but a small corps; it would only have been necessary to have watched the approaches that would have remained.

What approaches are there to Lillo, except by the dykes?—I believe there are none after an inundation takes place.

Was not one of those dykes in possession of the enemy, and could we not approach only by the other?—We should have approached by the dyke leading from Santvliet to Lillo.

Then how could the place be invested, when the other was in possession of the enemy?—We could not prevent the garrison from retiring towards Antwerp, on the right bank of the river.

If you could not prevent the garrison withdrawing you could not of course prevent it from being reinforced?—Certainly not.

Therefore it could not strictly be invested?—No, certainly not.

Could not the garrison of Lillo have been reinforced from the left bank of the river?—Certainly, so long as Liefkenshoeik was in their possession.

Even after Liefkenshoeik was in our possession, could they not have thrown men upon the right bank of the river above it from the left?—I think if we had been in possession of Liefkenshoeik, we should probably have succeeded in taking Lillo, for from my recollection of the situation of Liefkenshoeik, it commands Lillo; and I do think, that the enemy would have found it difficult to have reinforced it from the right hand, if we had been in possession of Liefkenshoeik.

Do you consider, then, that there was no force of the enemy upon the left bank of the river?—I believe there was; but that force was higher up than Liefkenshoeik, it was at Berveren principally; the country on the right, called the Dole Polder, was by report entirely inundated, and consequently there was no force there.

What force do you think necessary to have taken Liefkenshoeik?—I think that, with the assistance of the navy, which was very ample, Liefkenshoeik might possibly have been taken by 2,000 soldiers.

Do you suppose that 2,000 men could have maintained their situation upon the left bank of the river, opposed to the whole force the enemy could have brought in that quarter?—I conceive that the possession of Liefkenshoeik would, in all probability, have opened the Scheldt to the fleet, which would have prevented the enemy from sending any considerable force against Liefkenshoeik, as their attention would entirely have been drawn to the protection of their ships, and the defence of Antwerp.

Previously to the capture of Liefkenshoeik, do you suppose 2,000 men could have maintained their ground upon the left bank of the river?—I think they could, and for this reason, that the inundation would have secured the right flank of any corps directing its operations against Liefkenshoeik.

Had not the enemy possession of the dyke upon the left bank leading from the South to Liefkenshoeik?—They were in possession of Doel, where they had a bat-

tery, and from which we must necessarily have driven them.

You have stated that the right flank of our army would have been exposed when that army was confined merely to the dyke upon the left bank of the river; what front would it have shewn to the enemy?—I have stated, that the right flank of our corps, for I cannot call it an army; marching upon the dyke, would have been protected by the inundation; the front it would have exposed to the enemy would have been very small, for it would have been only the breadth of that dyke.

Then the attack of our army must have been confined to merely the road or dyke they had possession of, while the enemy had likewise possession on the other side of Liefkenshoeik?—I should have trusted to the armed vessels for the protection of the left flank of the corps acting against Liefkenshoeik.

Do you suppose the flotilla could have passed up the river previously to the taking of Liefkenshoeik?—I conceive that the flotilla could have moved in unison with the troops on shore, until they had got within distance for establishing batteries, when the operation might have been performed by regular approach by zigzag.

Did not you suppose, as a military man, that when the attack of our army was confined to a narrow dyke, the enemy might by digging ditches, and the most trifling field-works, stop the progress of our army completely?—I do not think that such obstructions would completely stop the progress of our army.

With an obstinate resistance, do you think our army could have advanced half a mile a day?—I do consider that it would have advanced considerably more than that distance.

This is supposing that Liefkenshoeik was taken?—No, I mean for the attack of Liefkenshoeik, that we should have made a much more rapid progress than half a mile a day.

How long do you think it would have taken to have got possession of Liefkenshoeik with the assistance of the navy?—I should suppose within ten days, certainly.

During that time might not the enemy have passed all the forces they could across the river above Liefkenshoeik?—They certainly might, they had an opportunity of passing any force they had.

Those forces of course might have gone

into Lillo?—They must have beat our covering army before they could have entered Lillo.

I had understood that the whole country was inundated round Lillo, and that the only approach to Lillo was by the dykes, the one leading from Santvliet, the other from Antwerp; if the country was inundated, where would our covering army have been placed?—I did not understand from the intelligence we received, that the inundation was quite so complete as is supposed in the question: our covering army would necessarily have been placed to the eastward of it.

With the facility the enemy had of increasing their force in Lillo, do you not think it would have been necessary to place a very considerable force to mask that garrison?—I do not think it would have required a considerable force, believing, as I do, that the enemy had not the power to bring a considerable force against us.

Is it not the constant practice, in the expectation of siege to destroy all suburbs, supposing their neighbourhood to a fortress to be such as to afford the besieging army any facility of attack or any convenient shelter?—Certainly.

What time do you suppose it would require to destroy the suburbs on the Breda side of Antwerp?—I do not think they could have been effectually destroyed, it was a village; it was a large place; there were houses entirely built of stone, in the neighbourhood, that could not have been removed.

Do you not know of any fortress, in the neighbourhood of which there had been stone suburbs, which have been destroyed in the event of an attack being expected?—I do not know of any particular fortress so described; undoubtedly all obstacles may be removed in the course of time; but it would require great time, I conceive, to remove two or three hundred stone houses.

Is it not invariably the practice in the expectation of siege, to batter down such houses, even supposing them to be built of stone, from the supposition or apprehension of their affording any cover whatever to a besieging army?—I conceive the ruins of that suburb would have afforded us very ample cover for our operations.

Is the Committee to understand the custom is invariably to do that which is stated in the question?—The custom is invariably to attempt to do it.

Do you know sufficient of the distance



of the arsenal from any point from which batteries could have been erected outside of the town, to enable you to state confidently that shot or shells from such batteries could have reached the arsenals and dock-yards?—I conceive that shells might have done it.

From what source do you derive the information that enables you to give that opinion?—Supposing that mortars had been planted at the distance of 600 yards from the walls of Antwerp, which I conceive they might have been, they might easily have thrown shells a distance of about 1,500 yards, which certainly would have reached the arsenal.

From what source of information are you enabled to state that batteries erected at the distance of 600 yards from the town, would not have been commanded by batteries from the citadel, or from the town of Antwerp itself?—They could not have been commanded from the citadel, because the town intervenes, and care would have been taken to have placed those batteries under sufficient cover to have protected them against the fire of the town in as great a degree as was practicable.

What sufficient cover do you conceive you could obtain for those batteries?—The usual cover given to a mortar battery, an epaulement in front of it.

The object being to destroy the arsenal at Antwerp, and you having already stated certain distances, from what source of information are you enabled to speak positively to those distances and to state that you could erect your battery at any distance within reach of the arsenal?—The sea front of Antwerp is about a mile and a half in length, of which space the arsenal, from the description I have had of it, occupies about a mile; consequently there would be a distance of about 1,500 yards from the arsenal to the place where I conceive that batteries might have been established.

You have stated, that when you were at Antwerp in the year 1794, there were no pallisades?—There was none, to the best of my recollection.

In what time could the enemy have placed pallisades?—The extent of the works of Antwerp is very nearly four miles, I should think that length of pallisading might with a reasonable proportion of hands have been done in three months, or perhaps not quite so much.

State what instance, in your knowledge

of war, you know, where a garrison defending a fortress, has been intimidated by the populace.—I believe the last war affords us many instances where garrisons surrendered without making any opposition, and particularly in that country.

In consequence of being intimidated by the populace?—That I cannot speak to.

You have said, that on the 25th of August, had the health of the troops permitted it an attempt would have been made; do you believe that the force of the Enemy and his preparations at Antwerp were such on the 25th of August as to have afforded a reasonable hope, had the health of the troops permitted, that 17,000 British could have accomplished any successful operations against Antwerp at that moment?—I believe I have only stated, that the attempt would have been made against Liefkenshoeik and Lillo; I have said further, that if we had been so fortunate as to have possessed ourselves of those places, the fleet would have entered, and that might have led to important consequences.

Do you know of any assurance given to lord Chatham, of a naval co-operation in the attack upon Flushing, immediately as the troops advanced towards that fortress?—I know of no particular assurance having been given, but that such a co-operation is stated in the plans of attack, and had been predetermined upon.

You have said, that lord Chatham sent an aid-de-camp to sir Richard Strachan immediately upon the troops approaching the fortress, begging that he would enter the Scheldt; was that message intended to call upon sir Richard Strachan to make an attack upon the fortress, or to enter the Scheldt for any other purpose?—As to the nature of the co-operation that might have been afforded by the admiral, that would have depended upon himself, but the degree of co-operation that my lord Chatham expected and asked for was, the aid of the bomb-vessels to bombard the town.

Do you know the answer returned to lord Chatham?—I do not know it; I never heard it.

You have stated, that under certain circumstances the garrison of Antwerp might have been intimidated into a surrender; do you found that opinion principally upon the weakness of the garrison in point of number, or their want of discipline?—I found it upon both.

Do you think a disembarkation would

have been practicable at Santvliet, while the enemy remained in possession of Bathz and the batteries on South Beveland?—By no means; we should not have been able to have got up the West Scheldt, if the enemy remained in possession of South Beveland.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Rear Admiral Sir RICHARD KEATS, K. B. again called in; Examined by the Committee.

Supposing the fort of Liefkenshoeik to be reduced, are you of opinion that the boom which the enemy had placed across the Scheldt, could in that case have been removed or destroyed?—I am of opinion it could.

Supposing the boom to be removed or destroyed, the fort of Liefkenshoeik to be reduced, and the fort of Lillo to be masked by the army, are you of opinion the fire from that fort might have been silenced by the heavier ships so as to admit of the flotilla and light armed ships passing up the Scheldt?—I have said in a former part of my evidence, that I had considered the reduction of both those forts necessary for the fleet to have co-operated with the army before Antwerp; but I do consider, under the circumstances stated, that men of war might have anchored, and if they could not have silenced the fort, have afforded a certain protection to vessels passing; but I should conceive it could not have been effected without some loss.

Supposing the main body of the army to have advanced upon Antwerp, masking Lillo, and with the exception of that work to be masters of the right bank of the Scheldt as high as Antwerp, are you of opinion that the frigates and light ships of war including gun-boats could have advanced to co-operate with the army against Antwerp, the force which had reduced Liefkenshoeik advancing on the left bank to cover their flank, and to disarm any batteries on that side?—I consider as I have stated, that a force under the circumstances I have stated in answer to the previous question, might with some loss have passed Lillo, and have co-operated with the army, provided we were in possession of both banks of the river; when in a former examination I stated as my opinion, that both Liefkenshoeik and Lillo should be in our possession, I connected with it the idea of both banks of the river being in possession of the enemy.

After the fall of Liefkenshoeik, the Eng-

lish army being in possession of the right bank of the Scheldt, with the exception of Lillo, could the navy have passed the supplies and stores of the army up to Antwerp, and landed them at such point as might be most convenient, then in the possession of the British army?—I believe it would have been difficult, but not impracticable, Liefkenshoeik being in our possession, and having Lillo the only impediment to encounter; but I question whether the frequent communication requisite for supplying the army with the stores, provisions and ammunition, that might be necessary for carrying on a siege, could be effected, but with considerable delay and difficulty.

Supposing Antwerp, as it is understood, to have been entirely open and undefended towards the river, also Lillo and Liefkenshoeik in our possession, would not that have been the best mode of advancing to get possession of Antwerp, without being under the necessity of sending the army by land, and the delay of a regular siege? I do not conceive it would have been practicable to have got possession of Antwerp by the means proposed in the question, the enemy's line-of-battle ships were off Antwerp, and the fortifications on the Tête de Flandre would have prevented our flotilla and the transports with the stores and provisions for the army approaching Antwerp.

Would it have been practicable, our army being in possession of the bank of the river immediately opposite Antwerp, by the erection of batteries to have forced the enemy's fleet, if they had even been at the lower part of the town, and to have compelled them to have retired up the river?—Yes, I presume it would.

When did you join the squadron with lord Gardner off the Stone Bank?—The 27th of July in the evening.

When did you hear that the Venerable or any line-of-battle ship was anchored in the Stone Deep?—On the 29th; on the 28th I considered the Venerable, or a line-of-battle ship, to have been anchored to the southward of the Stone Deep.

When did you weigh to join that ship?—On the morning of the 29th, seeing part of the Expedition in shore, I weighed with the Superb and Curaçoa, and joined sir R. Strachan about noon that day in the Stone Deep.

When you weighed with the Superb and Curaçoa to join the Venerable, could lord Gardner have weighed to close with

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the Weilen, ready to assist commodore Owen with his boats?—I weighed without any great difficulty, but I believe the wind freshened considerably afterwards, and the difficulty increased in proportion.

Did you give lord Gardner any orders when you left the squadron to join sir R. Strachan?—I enclosed to lord Gardner all the papers he had delivered to me on my joining the squadron on the 27th, and directed his lordship to resume the command of the squadron, and I believe directed lord Gardner in the same letter, to execute the orders of the commander in chief.

Did you make any other communication on the subject of lord Gardner's moving towards the Weilen, to assist commodore Owen with his boats?—Having put lord Gardner in possession of all the orders I had received from him, I did not consider it necessary to give any particular orders, but I accompanied my letter with a note, not upon his Majesty's service, recommending to his lordship to remove the squadron further in shore.

That is, nearer to the Weilen?—Yes; I did not say nearer to the Weilen.

Are you aware that lord Gardner received a letter from sir R. Strachan, dated the 29th of July, directing him to anchor off West Capelle, keeping the Duerloo open, and did that position prevent lord Gardner getting nearer to commodore Owen than 15 or 16 miles?—Lord Gardner I believe certainly had not, at the time I left him on the morning of the 29th, received any thing from sir R. Strachan of that date.

Would lord Gardner's taking that position, put it out of his power to assist commodore Owen with his boats, being at so great a distance?—It must have depended solely, I conceive, on circumstances of weather.

In the former part of your evidence, you allude to a survey that was furnished to you by the admiralty; do you mean the survey that is commonly called the French survey of the Scheldt?—Yes, I do.

As far as you had an opportunity of judging, express your opinion on the accuracy of that survey.—I believe it generally to be very accurate, from my observations; and I heard it commonly spoken of as such by the naval officers employed in the Scheldt.

In a letter to sir R. Strachan, dated the 12th of August, you mentioned that you were then in command of the navigation

of Bathz, but that your continuing so, depended upon the movements of the enemy; inform the Committee by what force of the enemy it was that you apprehended the command might be taken from you.—The naval force at that time near Bathz was not sufficient to have secured the command of the navigation, had the enemy pushed down their frigates and numerous flotilla; they had it also in their power to have moved down ships of the line, had they been so disposed.

Had sir Home Popham with the flotilla joined you at that time?—Yes; on the 11th sir Home Popham came up the Western Scheldt with the flotilla.

Can you inform the Committee what number of flotilla the enemy possessed, which could have been brought against you at that time, and of what description?—I believe 50 brigs or vessels of that size; and I cannot say how many, but a very numerous flotilla of gun-boats and small vessels.

Was it only from one channel that any movement of flotilla might have been expected upon your force?—There were also 44 gun-boats at that time off Bergen-op-Zoom, but our flotilla was between that force and the enemy's force in the Western Scheldt.

Soon after this period, you sent sir Home Popham to sir R. Strachan to urge the commanders in chief to make all the dispatch they possibly could; had you any particular reason for sending that pressing message?—Being in possession of the navigation to Lillo, and having at that time a sufficient naval force to have protected any movements, I felt anxious that the commanders in chief should be satisfied naval impediments, to any movement they might intend, were removed; and conceiving it desirable to lose as little time as possible, I was induced to send sir Home Popham to sir R. Strachan.

After the accident which obliged the Expedition to put into the Roompot, are you prepared to say how many days that need necessarily have retarded the army arriving, with its ordnance and cavalry stores, at Santvliet?—I cannot precisely state the number of days delay it occasioned; but I always considered it, especially as no other plan was immediately adopted, very injurious to the further progress and success of the Expedition.

Am I right in considering that the chief injury it occasioned, was the necessity of working through the Slough passage all

the transports, both with the cavalry and the heavy ordnance?—I think, if the troops had landed immediately on South Beveland, or proceeded up the East Scheldt, the delay would have been less felt.

Was not the weather very much worse than at that season of the year was to have been expected?—Yes, I think it was. [The witness was directed to withdraw.]

E. W. C. R. OWEN, Esq. of H. M. S. Clyde, again called in;—Examined by the Committee.

Supposing the fort of Liefkenshoeik to be reduced, are you of opinion that the boom which the enemy had placed across the Scheldt, could in that case have been removed or destroyed?—I think it might.

Supposing the boom to be removed or destroyed, the fort of Liefkenshoeik reduced, and the fort of Lillo to be masked by the army, are you of opinion, the fire from that fort might have been silenced by the heavier ships so as to admit of the flotilla and light-armed ships passing up the Scheldt?—Under favourable circumstances, the flotilla and light-armed ships might have passed up.

What are the favourable circumstances to which you allude?—Fair wind and tide.

Supposing the main body of the army to have advanced upon Antwerp, masking Lillo, and with the exception of that work to be masters of the right bank of the Scheldt as high as Antwerp, are you of opinion that the frigates and light ships of war, including gun-boats, could have advanced to co-operate with the army against Antwerp, the force which had reduced Liefkenshoeik advancing on the left bank, to cover their flank, and to disarm any batteries on that side?—I should think they might: I beg it to be understood, that I speak but from reference to the charts, that I was never there myself.

Did you find the copy of the French survey of the Scheldt, with which you were furnished by the admiralty, accurate as far as you had an opportunity of observing?—Very accurate.

In a former part of your examination, when you were asked concerning the number of men that lord Gardner's squadron would have enabled you to land, you stated, that you did not know what number of ships of the line lord Gardner's squadron consisted of; if lord Gardner

had eight sail of the line, and had sent to you all the boats applicable to the landing of troops, what additional number might you thereby have been enabled to land?—I reckon each line-of-battle ship to be capable of landing about 80 men, which would have been between 6 and 700 for eight sail of the line; but the answer which I then gave, was on the supposition that the launches would be employed with carronades to cover the landing.

Was not the weather which you experienced much worse than you had any reason to have expected at that season of the year?—The weather was unusually bad for that season.

When you represented to sir R. Strachan that you were afraid the Nymphen was so short of complement that she could not man all her boats, and work her guns at the same time, in case it was necessary to place her along side of a fort, did not sir Richard Strachan immediately give you as many of the volunteer sea fencibles as you thought sufficient to enable her to man all her boats for landing troops?—He did.

Inform the Committee, whether, if lord Gardner's squadron had joined you in the Wielin passage, you would not have been able to have landed such a force as might have got possession of Cadzand on the morning of the 30th?—I think we should.

Was there any thing to prevent lord Gardner's joining you at that time?—Lord Gardner was to leeward at that time.

On the 28th was lord Gardner to leeward?—He was to leeward during the whole time.

So that he could not have joined you?—On the 28th or 29th he could not, on the 30th he took his station off the Duerloo.

Inform the Committee whether, had more ships of war entered the Western Scheldt before the 1st or 2d of August, the enemy would not have found greater difficulty in throwing reinforcements into Flushing?—There would, provided he threw reinforcements at that time; but I do not understand that any reinforcements crossed till the 6th and 7th.

If more ships of war had entered the Western Scheldt before that time, would it not have increased the difficulty of throwing reinforcements into Flushing?—It would have increased the difficulty; but I doubt whether it would have prevented it entirely; for the gun-boats could not keep their stations for the weather.

Were not the channels into the Western Scheldt sufficiently buoyed at that time to enable ships of war to enter?—They were.—[The Witness was directed to withdraw.]

The Right Hon. Lord Viscount CASTLE-REAGH, a Member of the House, attending in his place;—Again examined by the Committee.

Did lord Chatham consult with your lordship in the beginning of the month of August, and in such correspondence did lord Chatham intimate any change of plan as to the future operations of the army after their arrival at Walcheren?—Lord Chatham never did in his correspondence, either public or private, with me, intimate any change of plan with respect to his operations: I think, in a private letter of the 2d of August, lord Chatham expressed his expectations, that as soon as as Kammekinsfell, the armament would be able to pass through the Slough passage into the Western Scheldt; and he intimated to me his determination to proceed in person to Bathz so soon as the transports could be passed through the Slough passage.

Lieut. Col. OFFNEY called in;—Examined by the Committee.

What appointment did you hold during the occupation of the island of Walcheren?—I served as assistant quartermaster-general with the left wing of the army, from the 2d of July to the 14th of September; on which day I was appointed deputy quartermaster-general to the forces which remained in Walcheren.

In what places were the sick accommodated in the island of Walcheren?—The sick were in general accommodated in large storehouses, in churches; and at Middleburg in the old Dutch hospital, and in the French hospital, and in several large private houses, which were not occupied by the inhabitants.

How were those places selected?—There were two officers of the department under me appointed to make requisitions to the magistrates; we then looked at the places; a list of them was then sent to the inspector of hospitals; the inspector of hospitals then sent an officer of that department, or, very often, went himself to inspect those places; and he chose them, if he thought fit, for the sick.

The officers of the medical department were in all cases consulted on the

propriety of selecting those places?—In all cases.

Did any of those places appear to you to be damp or ill aired?—No, they did not.

When were the troops that were first landed in Walcheren provided with blankets?—They were provided with blankets about six days after their landing.

Did it ever come to your knowledge that soldiers were in the hospitals without a blanket?—Never.

What description of sick were placed in the storehouse in the arsenal?—No sick; the naval storehouse was a barrack; when we first took possession of Flushing, the battalion of detachments under colonel Cochrane was quartered in it; I have seen no sick in it; but the convalescents of the 36th regiment had a room allotted to them in that storehouse.

Had you occasion yourself to inspect the hospitals in Flushing?—It is not exactly the duty of the person at the head of the quartermaster-general's department to inspect the hospitals; we point out the places we think suitable, and propose them to the medical department; but I have often been in the hospitals, and very often in the one just mentioned.

In those inspections did you observe men sleeping on the boards with their great coats on?—I have seen the men generally with their great coats on, but never saw a man without a blanket, and never saw them without straw.

Had you a sufficient stock of blankets in store to supply the sick in the hospitals?—Quite sufficient.

Have you any means of ascertaining what quantities were issued?—I have a memorandum in my pocket; there were altogether on the Expedition about 40,000 blankets, and above; the troops that remained in Walcheren, when a part of the army went to South Beveland, had blankets, which were not issued by my order. Gen. Brownrigg, who was at Middleburg at head quarters, gave the order, as the head of the department; and it was only when lord Chatham removed his head quarters to Goes, that I was at the head of the department for the island; at that time there were 5,805 blankets issued at Flushing by the order of major Muller, an assistant quartermaster under me.

Does it appear by any of the returns that a number was issued sufficient to make up two for each individual in the hospital?—Yes.

At what time?—From the 30th of Sept. blankets were issued to make up two per man, and the last were on the 3d of Oct.

Can you state to the Committee what number of sick were embarked between the 13th of Sept. and the 11th of October;—I can; 2,239 between the 14th of Sept. and the 11th of October.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Lieut. Colonel PILKINGTON, called in, and examined by the Committee.

You superintended the destruction of the basin and naval works at Flushing?—I did.

Was the basin completely and effectually destroyed?—The entrance to the basin was completely and effectually destroyed; the interior of the basin, the retaining wall of it on the south-side, was spared, from the representations of the inhabitants, that their destruction would take place if it were removed.

Was the foundation of the gates in the channel, at the entrance of the basin destroyed?—The walls of the flood-gates, which were of masonry about 128 feet long 36 feet thick of masonry, were blown up by means of mines; the mines were sunk down as near to the bottom as we considered to be advisable to guard against being blown by letting in the water; the sill of the flood-gates were nine feet below low-water; we went down within two feet of the sills, we were therefore seven feet under low-water mark; our lines of least resistance were from seven to nine feet from the surface of the walls, and on each side we had four mines, so that there were altogether eight mines, and they succeeded in blowing the bottom completely out into the water, so that the upper mass of masonry fell down upon it.

Can you form any judgment as to the length of time it would require to repair the works which you destroyed?—Yes, I should think two years; it will require the next season to establish dams, perhaps steam-engines to get rid of the water so as to examine and clear the foundations upon which to establish a superstructure; and it would require another year to perform the works.

Are you of opinion it will be impossible to repair those works without establishing steam-engines?—They may get rid of the water by other machinery, they make great use of the screw-pump in that country.

Can you form any estimate of the expence that would attend the repair of those works?—No, I cannot.

Do you think it would be more difficult, and a longer operation, to form a new entrance entirely, a new dock, than to repair that you have destroyed?—I cannot answer that.

You do not know whether that would take up more time or not?—No, I do not, so much depends upon the situation that would be embraced for it.

Is not the great labour of forming a dock the excavation and the removal of the earth?—No; I should conceive the retaining walls, and forming entrances to it, a much greater labour.

Do you think that by the application of an unlimited quantity of human labour, it might not be perfected in less than two years?—The latter end of next year I think it may be used.

By next Oct. twelvemonth the whole might be reinstated?—Yes, I should think so.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

JOHN WEBB, Esq. Inspector of Hospitals, again called in, and examined by the Committee.

Were either the church or the great storehouse at Flushing ever made use of as an hospital for the sick?—Not whilst I had charge of the department.

What buildings in the town of Flushing were selected for the use of the sick to establish the hospitals?—The hospitals were in private houses, and the largest and most commodious that could be procured in Flushing.

Upon the whole, did you consider them as proper houses for the reception of the sick?—The houses were of a very good description, but some of them had been injured in consequence of the bombardment.

Can you explain the circumstance of soldiers being seen lying in their great coats, supposed to be sick, on the floor in the great storehouse, and in the church?—I know that those buildings were made use of as barracks; but as I had not frequent opportunities of seeing them, I cannot answer from my own knowledge.

Have you a return of bedding and blankets issued for the use of the hospitals at Flushing?—I have.

How many sets of bedding and blankets were issued?—1,597 sets of bedding, and 600 blankets, between the 25th of Aug. and the 24th of October.

Have you compared the provision of bedding and blankets with the average number of sick, so as to form any estimate

whether they were adequate to the supply?—The average number of sick and convalescents was about 1,650; the convalescents made use of their blankets as soldiers.

Who was the medical officer under your superintendence, and in charge of the sick at Flushing?—Mr. Lidderdale, surgeon to the forces.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

WILLIAM LIDDERDALE, Esq. called in, and examined by the Committee.

Were you stationed at Flushing, in charge of the sick in the hospitals in that town?—Yes.

Where were the hospitals established?—In the best buildings in the town.

Was either the great storehouse or the church made use of as an hospital?—Never, during the time I was at Flushing.

Were the sick adequately supplied with bedding during the time they were under your care?—There was a deficiency of bedding.

At what period, and for how long?—Till about the beginning of Oct. when the sick were removed into the transports.

To what extent was that deficiency?—I cannot say to what extent exactly, but it was not to that extent to deprive the severe cases from being amply supplied.

What accommodation was supplied for the cases which could not receive complete sets of bedding?—They were accommodated in hospitals, and with blankets, a certain number of which were supplied from the quartermaster-general's stores.

Do you recollect col. Cochrane making any complaint of a want of medicines, that any of the troops were subject to?—Perfectly.

Upon enquiry, what did that deficiency of medicines arise from?—It was stated, upon my arrival one afternoon from Middleburg, by gen. Picton, commanding the garrison, that a report had reached him that there was a deficiency in the corps of embodied detachments; upon which it became my duty to investigate the charge, and I found that some inconvenience had occurred, but it arose from the surgeon not anticipating the wants and making out his requisition when his store was exhausted of a few articles of medicine only, but I conceive that inconvenience must have been trifling; as the other corps in the garrison were amply supplied, from which he might have had upon application.

If the surgeon then had made his requi-

sition before the actual deficiency occurred, could there have been difficulty in procuring the necessary supplies?—Certainly not.

Who was the surgeon?—Mr. Hackett.

Were the houses where the sick were lodged, injured in their roofs?—Yes, by the bombardment.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

Captain sir HOME POPHAM, a Member of the House, attending in his place; again examined by the Committee.

Did you receive a letter from lord Chatham at any time, expressing his satisfaction with the ships having been brought into the Roompot?—Yes, I did.

Have you that letter?—I have not it with me, but can produce it at any other time.

Do you recollect writing a letter to lord Chatham about the 5th of Aug. off Rammekins, containing a *Projet*, of which this is a copy?—[It being shewn to sir Home Popham]—I do remember having written a letter, of which I believe this to be a copy, and I do remember having written a short memorandum, of which I believe this also to be a copy: there was a report and a very strong report circulated, that the duke of Dantzic was at Antwerp with 40,000 men; in consequence of that, it occurred to me that after Walcheren was taken, we might probably have some chance of destroying the ships at Helvoet Sluys, and I suggested that idea to sir R. Strachan and to lord Chatham, founded however upon the report of the duke of Dantzic being at Antwerp; and I at the time suggested the idea of trying to block up the Scheldt about Saeftingen, the pilots whom I had consulted informing me that the channel at Saeftingen was so closed, there was hardly room for a vessel to pass through: I state this circumstance because I was afterwards directed by sir R. Strachan to make an examination of all the narrow channels in the river, to furnish him with materials for reporting to the admiralty whether it was feasible or not to stop up the navigation of the Scheldt; and as the result of my examinations are in that letter, I hope there will be no objection to that letter being produced, and attached to this, otherwise it might seem that I gave an opinion in direct opposition to that of sir R. Strachan; but this first opinion was an opinion upon the reports I had received, but not upon the examination: under these circum-

stances, I can have no objection to this private paper being read, if my letter of the 14th of Sept. is attached to it.—[The letter was delivered in, and read, with the memorandum inclosed in it.—Sir H. Popham delivered in a letter from capt. Cockburn, to sir R. Strachan, which was read.]

Are you aware of any order given by sir R. Strachan to rear admiral Otway, dated the 27th of June, to take the lower guns out of the ships of the line, and prepare the main holds for the reception of horses?—I believe there was such an order.

Was that order revoked?—I do not know.

In point of fact, did the ships of the line sail without their lower-deck guns?—I believe the greater number of them did, I mean of the fleet from Portsmouth.

Do you know whether the Centaur and Superb carried their lower-deck guns?—I think they both carried their lower-deck guns.

Do you know whether preparations were made on board the Royal Oak, for the reception of horses, and whether she took out any?—I do not know.

In the instructions given to sir Richard Strachan by the board of admiralty, dated the 17th of July, there are these words: "but as it is of importance that the line of battle ships attached to your squadron now in the Downs should be kept in all respects fit for the most effective service, as they may be required for attacking batteries for covering the landing of the troops in Walcheren, and to attend the army in its progress up the river, for the purpose of keeping in check the enemy's line-of-battle ships, or of attacking them if practicable; you are not to embark more than 200 soldiers in any one of the said ships-of-the-line;" how is that reconcilable with the number of troops actually embarked on board six sail-of-the-line in the Downs, as appears by the letter of vice-admiral Campbell to Mr. Pole, dated the 17th of July?—I really do not know that I shall be able to give every information upon that point; but I think that it is likely the restriction of 200 men to each line-of-battleship might allude to the 8 sail-of-the-line under lord Gardner, as they were to be kept as effective as possible, for they had all their lower deck guns in, and probably the 6 sail-of-the-line alluded to, may have had all their lower deck guns out.

The names of the ships are, the Power-

ful?—She had her lower deck guns out. The Superb?—She had her lower-deck guns in.

The Venerable?—She had her lower deck guns in, and did not receive troops.

The York?—She had her lower deck guns out.

The Agincourt?—I think she had her lower deck guns out.

The Monmouth?—I think she had her lower deck guns out.

How is that to be reconciled with the scheme of embarkation to be found in p. 26 of the same number, whereby it is proposed to embark 15,000 on board 21 sail-of-the-line and 6 frigates, being at the rate of upwards of 555 men on board each ship?—Probably that scheme of embarkation may have been made by the admiralty, and they may have calculated that there were 21 sail-of-the-line without their lower deck guns, in which case there would have been no difficulty in their carrying 500 men for so short a passage: I only mention this, however, as a supposition.

It appears that 39 sail-of-the-line and 36 frigates were employed upon this Expedition, what was the object of employing so many men of war, particularly so many of the line?—I should imagine the admiralty would be best able to answer that question.

How many of the ships of the line were employed in active service?—I believe they were all employed in active service that we had with us, if I perfectly understand the question.

Were they intended to silence batteries, or to meet the enemy's ships?—I suppose they were intended for every purpose of offensive warfare, either against batteries or against the enemy's ships; I particularly allude to those ships with their lower deck guns in.

You have stated, in your former evidence, that with every thing favourable, you think the fleet might have passed up as far as Santvliet in 48 hours; do you include line of battle ships in that opinion?—Yes, with every thing favourable.

Was it ever intended to push the line of battle ships through the narrow channel between Lillo and Liefkenshoeik to Antwerp?—I think the commander in chief has stated, that he had four ships carried up to Batha, for the express purpose of forcing the boom of Lillo, if it had been necessary.

How long would it take, with every ad-



vantage, to sail the squadron up to Antwerp?—I really am not sufficiently master of the navigation, from the boom of Lillo up to Antwerp, to give a positive answer to that question; for I have not been there since the year 1794.

Supposing we had succeeded in destroying the enemy's ships and demolishing the naval arsenal at Antwerp, would it not have been difficult to have got our ships back again without a leading wind down the river?—It certainly would have been more difficult to have done so than with a fair wind.

At the time of the year this Expedition was undertaken, are not the winds apt to be very changeable and baffling?—If I am to answer from experience, I should say, the prevailing winds were from south west to south south west, which was the reason we could not get through the Slough.

Is it your opinion, that had the operations against Antwerp succeeded to the utmost, it would at best have been very uncertain when our ships could have got back again?—The time would have depended a great deal upon the winds, but we should have been better acquainted with the channel in returning than we were in going up.

If we had failed in our attack on Antwerp, would not the difficulty have been vastly increased?—I do not know that a failure, unless our ships were crippled, would have increased the difficulties of the navigation; we certainly should not have gone back in such good spirits.

When it is said in your former evidence the enemy's fleet would have run up some miles above Antwerp, I presume it is meant that they must have taken out their guns, and have been in other respects lightened; supposing any part of our squadron to have proceeded to Antwerp, in what mode would the enemy's fleet have been attacked?—I believe it is stated in the army journal, upon the intelligence received through gen. Sontag, that the enemy's fleet had taken out their guns below Bathz, and sent them up to Antwerp; it is impossible for me to say the exact mode in which the commander in chief would have attacked the enemy's fleet: if any of our ships had gone up, I apprehend that would have depended very much upon the position of the enemy's fleet when he made his disposition for attack.

Could any of our ships have gone up

with their lower deck guns on board?—I can only state that our ships went several miles above Bathz with their lower deck guns on board; and to a former question, I think I said, that as I had not been at Antwerp since 1794, I could not give an opinion about the navigation between the boom of Lillo and Antwerp.

Was the navigation of the Scheldt materially impeded by sinking vessels at its mouth?—I never knew that any had been sunk there.

Did not the instructions particularly point out any mode by which the Scheldt should be obtruded?—I believe there is an instruction to sir Richard Strachan, to sink vessels in some part of the Scheldt; but I should apprehend it was discretionary with him to do it or not, as he should see upon examination whether the purpose was likely to be answered of blocking up the navigation of the Scheldt; and I think his report of the 14th of September, which will be before the Committee, will give every information upon that subject.

Considering the growing state of the enemy's fleet in the Scheldt, do you not conceive that the possession of the station of Flushing was an important position to this country?—I think it was an important military position.

With a view to prevent any naval attack of this country from the Scheldt, do you not conceive it to be of immense importance to this country?—I do think in that point of view the possession of it would be of great importance.

Do you not think that the country having been once in possession of it, it is much to be regretted that there were not the means of retaining it?—As I said before, that I think it would be an important position in case the enemy intended any descent upon the coast of England from the Scheldt; I of course must be of opinion that it would be desirable to have kept it (provided the means of keeping it were not a greater disadvantage to the country, than the advantages which would be derived from the retention of it) upon the speculation of the enemy's fitting out a larger armament in the Scheldt to invade this country.

Is it not consistent with your knowledge, that vessels are hove down, coppered, and have their false keels put on, in rivers where there is a strong stream or tide?—I know that vessels are hove down in the Ganges, where there is a very strong tide; and I believe that they are also hove

down in the Tagus, where there is likewise a very strong tide; but it is so many years since I was in the Tagus, I cannot speak so positively as to that river, as I can about the Ganges.

Do you conceive that the tide in the Ganges and the Tagus is stronger than the tide in the Scheldt?—I am quite certain that the tide in the Ganges is stronger; and, to the best of my recollection it is also stronger in the Tagus; but I have not been there since I was a midshipman, when I went in with a prize.

Is it not then your opinion that the destruction of the basin at Flushing, will not entirely prevent the enemy from performing those operations in the Scheldt?—I should certainly think not.

Does not the Roompot afford a situation for a squadron of line of battle-ships to watch the enemy's fleet in the Scheldt?—I believe the distance from the nearest point of Walcheren to the Banjaert sand, was measured by admiral Otway under orders from the admiral, and therefore more correct information might be given by reference to that order; though I think myself as near as I can judge that the Banjaert is not within shot from the island of Walcheren.

From the nature of your answer the Committee is to conclude, is it not, that it is your opinion it does afford the situation which is pointed out in the question?—If I am right in presuming that the Banjaert is without shot of the island of Walcheren it certainly is so; but I am sure the Committee will be aware that one cannot be so certain as to distances, by merely going upon a place as by measurement.

If this be allowed, is not the value of Flushing, as a military post, very much diminished?—In proportion as the Roompot is capable of containing a large fleet, without the reach of Walcheren, so in proportion it must diminish the value of that position as a military and naval post.

Allowing this position to be such as may be taken, cannot a squadron sail from the Roompot with any wind which will enable the enemy to proceed out of the Scheldt?—Certainly, with any wind which will enable them to proceed through the

Duerloo, but probably not precisely the same as to go through the Wielin; however, the difference cannot be above a point or two, and it is not very material.

What do you conceive to be the breadth of the channel which separates Cadsand from Flanders?—I really do not know; but if I have said in any part of my evidence that it was three miles and an half, I must have misunderstood the question, and have supposed it to relate to the channel between Flushing and Cadsand.

Is the Committee to understand, that in your opinion, the Roompot will be a safe and convenient anchorage for a fleet of this country to watch the Scheldt from, supposing the surrounding land to be in the complete possession of the enemy?—That will depend a good deal upon the season of the year, and the force necessary to be kept there; I did not examine the nature of the anchorage particularly while I was there; and as I have every reason to believe that it has been examined and explored by officers under express directions, I should rather refer to their opinions, which must be much more correct than mine, who merely led the fleet in there, and afterwards was ordered upon another service, and did not return again to the Roompot.

You mean to say merely that this and your former answer are founded entirely upon the cursory view you took of the Roompot at the time you led in the fleet?—Certainly, it must have been from the view and the recollection I have from my being there formerly; for I made no minute examinations there, as I said before.

Could not an officer of experience hazard an opinion upon such a subject with the view which you had of the Roompot?—I am quite satisfied that an officer of much more experience than myself would prefer to make a much more minute examination when he was desired to give an opinion about a position for the fleet to remain in.—[The Chairman was directed to report progress, and ask leave to sit again.]

[For the remainder of the Papers relative to the Expedition to the Scheldt, see the App. to Vol. xvi.]



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